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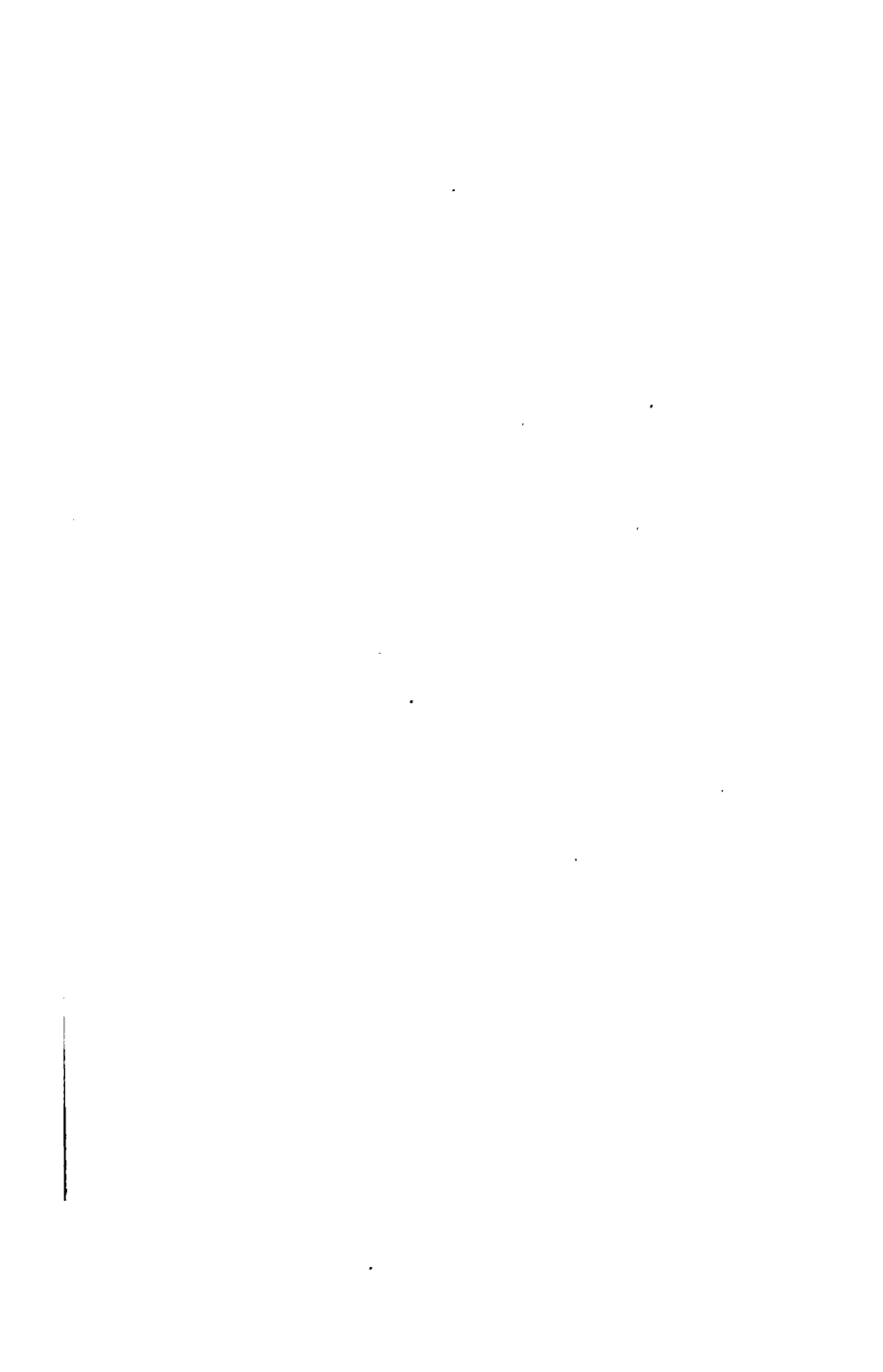


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THE
YOUNG INFIDEL:

A Fire-side Reberie.



BY A FRIEND TO TRUTH.

**"I can hardly think that man in his right mind who is
" destitute of Religion."**

CICERO.

**" A troubled ocean, spread
" With bold adventurers, their all on board :
" No second hope, if here their fortune frowns."**

YOUNG.

The Profits will be given in Aid of the Essex Life-Boat

COLCHESTER:

PRINTED FOR AND SOLD BY SWINBORNE AND WALTER.

**SOLD ALSO BY BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY, LONDON; AND
BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.**

1821.



PRINTED BY W. KEYMER, COLCHESTER.

Introductory Narrative.



DURING the severe winter of 1813, two Woodmen were employed in clearing the brush-wood from some extensive woods in a remote village, situated on the coast of a north-eastern county of our island. The morning had scarcely dawned when they repaired to their labour; a deep snow, which had fallen during the night, covered the ground, and the storm still continued to render all objects indistinct, while the violence and keenness of the blast obliged the poor men to defend their faces as well as they could with their hats from it's freezing influence. The wind had so much drifted the snow in the path they had usually taken, to the part of the woods where they were engaged in their occupation, that finding it impassable, they were obliged to take a more circuitous,

and nearly unfrequented way to the spot. They proceeded along a narrow foot-way (only wide enough to admit them singly), with that cheerly alacrity which health and labour give to the spirits, although poverty may frown on the individual, like the storm that must be encountered to preserve existence.

As they entered the wood, the intricacy of the path obliged them to proceed more slow and cautiously, the one who led the way singing, as he proceeded, a rustic ditty, to which the blast, "ever and anon" sweeping through the woods, seemed to form the chorus, as it mingled with the strain.

The song suddenly ceased! the Woodman stood a moment in the attitude of observation, then impetuously rushed forward, aiming a blow with his hatchet at some object, and exclaiming, at the same moment, "Ah! ye thief, I have nicked ye at last, I think;" but, in the eagerness of his advance, he stumbled over the root of a tree and fell to the ground. His companion had reached the spot ere he had recovered his feet,—“What ails thee, William?” he inquired;—“Why, man,—art thou crazy? I sees nothing, not I;

what thief art talking of, hey?"—"Why the fox, to be sure," replied William, in rather a pettish tone, "as tookt away my nice young turkies that I reckoned on to pay the docter for Bessy, and the rent for my little plot come Lady-day; I'ze sure, Roger, I saw the sly thief, and I warrant ye shall find some of my turkies there,"—pointing to a heap of dry leaves and snow, which the eddying wind seemed to have driven together. He stooped, in expectation of finding some remains of his lost treasure, but recoiled, as if horror-struck, as he cleared the leaves from a *human hand* the voracious animal he had disturbed had begun to devour.

"O Roger, man! it is not my turkies," he exclaimed, "there is Murder been done: Lord, save us, poor sinners!"—"Murder!" retorted Roger, in a more dauntless tone, "Murder! how can that be, and we so often about the woods, hey?" *His* courage, however, seemed also to fail him, as, further removing the leaves and snow, he discovered that it was really a human form that lay stretched before him,—not indeed with the horrid ghastliness of a violent death, but, as it were, in the placid stillness of profound

sleep; and though death had in reality laid his blanching hand upon the cheek, the poor men were too much frightened, and the light was too imperfect for them at the moment, accurately to ascertain the fact of dissolution, although a recollection of the half-devoured hand might have been sufficient for them to judge it must be so. They stood a few moments silent, and irresolute what to do, whether to leave the body as they had found it, or endeavour to remove it to the village. "Well, Roger," at length observed William, (who, though at first thrown off his guard, possessed a large portion of that acuteness and native good sense often very conspicuous in the most untutored minds), "Well, Roger, I see you think as I do, that we had better go to parson Albury and the 'Squire, and tell them what we have found; for you know, if *we* was to remove this poor creature, mayhap it may get us an ill name; there is no knowing what evil tongues will say." Roger entirely agreed in opinion with his fellow-workman, and they agreed to repair to the Rectory, as soon as it was likely the family would be risen; in the meantime, totally incapable of commencing their usual labour, they returned to the cottage of William, to await the proper time of seeing

Mr. Albury. Nor could they have taken a more judicious step, their worthy pastor being a man whose ear was ever open to the voice of distress, whose heart was ever prompt to execute the offices of humanity, however painful to his feelings, or difficult of accomplishment.

He listened with lively interest to the relation of the dismayed villagers, and commended their prudence in not attempting to remove the body. He accompanied them instantly to the 'Squire's, but as that gentleman was from home, the good man fixed upon the surgeon of the village as a proper person ; and attended by the two men and some labourers, with a vehicle in which to deposit the body for removal, and some restoratives, if found necessary, they repaired to the spot in anxious haste,—for Mr. Albury had much lamented that so long a time had elapsed since the discovery ; from the respect and scruples of the poor men not to disturb him.

The snow-storm had ceased, and the mists were clearing before the cheerful beams of a wintry sun, when the party arrived at the wood. The body had

remained untouched in the interval, and the surgeon, in a moment perceiving there was no hope of revival, directed it instantly to be removed from the spot where it lay to the poor-house of the village ere he examined it, first having, with unaccustomed delicacy on such occasions, covered the face with a large silk handkerchief from his pocket, to preserve the features from the gaze of unfeeling and idle curiosity, and remaining close to the vehicle, that his precaution might not be vain.

Arrived at the place of destination, he proceeded to examine the body, previous to the customary forms of ascertaining the cause of decease. Upon it were no marks of violence, to lead to suspicion of murder, or of self-destruction.

The features, though exhibiting upon inspection the contraction of death, had evidently in life been pre-eminently handsome, cast in the mould of manly beauty; as was also the form,—tall, muscular, and finely proportioned. The hair, adorning a head, and brow denoting acute intellect, but strong passions and a lofty spirit, was dark, and grew in a profusion of natural

wavy and glossy ringlets, plainly indicating that the beautiful gift of nature had received the greatest attention from the individual upon whom it was bestowed.

A gold watch, chain and valuable seals, with bank-notes to considerable amount, reduced to a certainty that no robber had deprived his fellow-creature of life, to gain his property. The unfortunate stranger appeared scarcely to have passed the period of minority; his dress was an entire suit of black, apparently new or nearly so, and of fashionable make and superior texture, which, with the delicate fineness of his linen, corroborated the impression made by his figure and countenance, that he held no inferior station in society. No papers were discovered in any part of the dress, leading to elucidation who the deceased was, or from whence; but on removing the vest, for the examination of the body, a packet was found placed close to the heart.

The several papers of which it was composed appeared frequently to have been examined, the folds being in many places worn through, and many words

blotted and obliterated as by tears. A picture suspended by a small hair-braid, of beautiful auburn colour, was also found fastened round the neck. It was the miniature portrait of a youthful female, of soft and pensive countenance, bearing a mingled expression of vivid intelligence and subdued feeling, which rendered it irresistibly interesting and attractive.

On the back of the setting was engraved E. D. and the motto "Forget me not;" beneath (as if recently marked with an imperfect instrument and unpractised hand) were the words—

"Forget thee! Never!"

The good Mr. Albury, and his equally worthy colleague, the Surgeon, felt a corresponding interest in the discovery of this unfortunate being, and immediately took the only means in their power to ascertain who it was who thus in the full vigour of youth had ended his mortal career in a place so sequestered, to which Providence seemed to have guided those who were appointed the humble means of his receiving the last Christian offices due to humanity. They advertised in a variety of papers of extensive circulation

the particulars of the discovery, but all means proved fruitless, and the remains of this stranger were consigned to the consecrated ground of the village cemetery, attended by a concourse of people; and though no relative eye witnessed with lingering grief the solemnity, though no tear of fond affection was shed over his premature fate, yet those of genuine sympathy abundantly flowed from the eyes of many an unsophisticated being.

The money found upon the person of this unfortunate was amply sufficient to defray the expenses of his modest obsequies, and to make up to the honest villagers their loss of time and even of property, a loss which had given keenness to poor William's eye, and speed to his benumbed limbs to overtake the supposed depredator; also to enable Mr. Albury to erect a plain stone, on which he caused to be engraved a memorial of the event, and the thought it suggested to his benevolent mind:—

“Tho’ no fond voice his parting soul could cheer,

“No pious hand his drooping eyelids close;

“Yet there was *One* his dying pray’r to hear,

“*One*, on whose mercy he might calm repose.”

He also distinguished the spot in his simple church-yard, by surrounding the grave with weeping birches and cypress; the pensile and wavy branches of the one, and the dark and mournful umbrage of the other, awakened in the beholder a melancholy feeling, congenial with the fate of the unfortunate unknown, and together with a few of the simple flowers "forget me not," which grew at the foot of the grave. (planted in allusion to the motto of the miniature), and a hardy myrtle, whose dark and glossy leaves, contrasted with the whiteness of the grave-stone, instantly caused the spot to be the point of attraction to the few strangers who visited a place so secluded as the village of A—— and many a tear of genuine feeling has been shed upon the verdant turf that covers the remains of "the young, the beautiful, the brave."

The packet of letters remained inviolate, in the possession of the good Mr. Albury, for several years, excepting to ascertain if they contained any name likely to lead to a discovery of the parties concerned in them; but initials only appearing, nothing could be traced by their means, and an impenetrable veil of mystery still resting upon the circumstances,

Mr. Albury examined the contents of the several papers, and judging that they contained some salutary admonitions and observations for youth, had decided upon preparing them for publication, when he was seized with an illness, terminating in his death. He therefore bequeathed them to a confidential friend, with a recommendation to fulfil his intention.

They now form the contents of this small volume, are evidently dictated by a fond and deeply attached heart, and a mind of correct principle, imbued with such an humility, as to render the possessor jealous of herself, and making her to dread the perversion or ruin of those principles, if exposed to the constant influence of a being regarded with devoted love ; yet of firmness and courage to avow those principles, and to withstand that tenderness, which, if yielded to, would lead them into danger of contamination. The person addressed appears to have been of a character generous, manly, and impassioned, but with that fatal self-confidence, and loftiness of spirit, which so often is found to plunge the young, the ardent, and the fearless into the gulph of error ; and thence, from spurning human control, to deny the existence of the Being whose

laws they have violated, and whose precepts they consider as cruel and unnecessary restraints upon the free-agency of a rational being: an individual, whose unfixed principles had yielded to the blandishments of sophistry, and the force of vicious example, offered to him under the fascinating guise of brilliant talent, and insinuating manners: one whose pride of heart, rejecting the frequent monitions of conscience, sought to strengthen it's sometimes wavering convictions, by making proselytes to his bewildering and gloomy system.

With the purest motives, are these Letters now offered to the public eye, and to the consideration of all those placed in a similar situation with the persons of whom they treat.

They profess not to exhibit any thing new, but they contain truths of vital importance to all; truths which cannot too often be reiterated, when infidelity walks unblushingly abroad, follows us into our most retired recesses, and in a thousand Proteus shapes meets our view.

That they may, when read and reflected upon by

the young, the too credulous, and self-confident, be found useful, is the unfeigned desire of the Relator of this Narration.

Then shall not the Writer have lived, then shall not the unfortunate unknown have died, in vain:—not in vain have been so wonderfully discovered,—ere his remains became food for the “beasts of the field!!”

"Pardon, O Master of the World! if not sufficiently sensible of my own weakness, and abandoning myself only to the emotions of my heart, I undertake to speak of thy existence,—thy grandeur,—and thy goodness!"

NECKAR.

"These vain and futile declaimers, go forth on all sides, armed with fatal paradoxes, to sap the foundation of our faith, and eradicate the principles of virtue. They contemptuously deride the antiquated names of patriotism and religion, consecrating their talents and philosophy to the debasement and abolition of every thing that is held sacred among mankind; not that they bear any real hatred to religion or virtue,—they are enemies only to the public opinion, and would perhaps readily become Christians, if banished to a country of Atheists.

"What extravagances will not a rage for singularity induce men to commit!"

(*Dict. Sciences.*—ROUSSEAU.)

"O Thou! Thou who canst melt the heart of stone,
"And make the desert of the hardest heart
"A paradise of soft and gentle thoughts,—
"Ah! will it ever be, that Thou wilt visit
"The darkness of my Lover's soul?"

(*Adapted from MILMAN.*)

THE YOUNG INFIDEL.

LETTER I.

*EUGENIA to ALBERT.**

LITTLE did I think the period of your return to your native country, my dear friend,—that moment which has, during the interval of your absence, formed my nightly dream, my constant waking thought,—ah! little did I think, the blissful moment of our meeting was to be, like a strong and dazzling beam of the sun emerging from a dark cloud, but the har-

* These names are substituted for the initials that appear in the manuscript.

binger of the coming storm, in which my peace was to become a wreck!

I think I hear you say, "whence this gloomy presage? what connection has it with that moment of felicity I have so recently experienced, when I pressed my faithful Eugenia to a bosom, whose every wish is responsive to her own?"

Alas, Albert, would it were so! but surely to convince you how much you deceive yourself on this point, I have but to remind you of those conversations with Mr. F. which took place during the few days we passed at his hospitable mansion,—into which, accompanied by you, my affianced husband, I entered one of the happiest of human beings, and quitted perhaps one of the most miserable; for there did my eagerly listening but eventually dismayed ear, hear from the lips of him to whom I had plighted my first, my willing vows, sen-

timents which must ever prevent their fulfilment, should he continue to cherish them. There did I hear the once virtuous, warm-hearted, high-souled Albert, express, with all the vehemence of a zealot, opinions which in their very nature are destructive to every noble principle, must chill every warm affection, and are totally inconsistent with the inherent dignity of man. There did I hear him deny with bold contempt, before youthful auditors, who had been wont to rest upon his words with enthusiasm, from a conviction of their virtuous tendency,—before such auditors did I hear him deny “there is a spirit in man;” and that an idea of a future state of rewards and punishments is but a necessary check for the vulgar, a mere political creed,—unworthy the credit or the thought of a refined understanding and an enlarged view of science and mankind.

Perhaps you may say, “And what, my Eugenia, have these opinions (free as they may

very naturally appear to thy timid, inexperienced mind, not yet emancipated from early prejudices), what have they to do with that love I have cherished for thee, through every change and fluctuation of them?—a love which neither time, absence, nor circumstances, sufficiently powerful to have diminished or destroyed a weaker attachment, have in the smallest degree been able to affect, other than, if possible, to increase it.”

I admit the strength, the sincerity of that attachment, of which I have had proofs indelibly impressed upon my heart and memory;—but, oh! Albert, much, very much does the unhappy change of *other* sentiments, effected by your residence abroad, and more especially by your association with Lord Algernon, much does it affect me, who have devoted myself to your happiness, and, alas! rested my own upon your integrity of principle, and congeniality of sentiment upon *every* point,—but, above all,

upon that most essential and important one—Religion. Much surely must it concern me to know, from your even proud confession, that you have rushed from the safe and long-tried path of religious hope, to enter upon a career of scepticism, which promises no termination, and in which no land-mark is recognised. Ah! much does it concern Eugenia, that her beloved Albert has quitted the luminous way of that Revelation, upon which she herself rests her hope, and from whence she has, in an eventful and calamitous, although short life, drawn her consolations, to wander in the intricate and dark avenues of human speculation, upon the existence or non-existence of a great superintending Cause; of a Being in whom “we live and move,” and whose mercy surrounds us on every side: that he has ranked himself with those unhappy men, who seek to impose upon others specious opinions (the offspring of pride), subversive of those incontestible truths, which have been believed and valued by the good of

all ages; and thus, leading astray the young and ardent, finally accomplish their cruel work by depriving them of the source of their happiness, removing from them the corrector of their passions, and snatching from them the anchor of their hope.

Yet, further:—say, Albert, can it be nothing for a wife, who when her prayers are full of the husband of her love, to feel that the same pure offering is *not* made for her, by that being upon whom she relies, under heaven, for every earthly bliss; to know, that, instead of pleading *together*, and for *each other*, before the throne of the Most High, he even derides, as superstitious, enthusiastic, and visionary, the holy exercise? Can it be nothing to a fond and confiding heart to hear him, upon whose head she is supplicating heaven to shower it's choicest blessings, denying it's power; and to see him a wanderer through the trackless desert of the world, yet refusing to look towards that glori-

ous star, which would safely guide him to a happier and richer clime? Can it be nothing to hear him, for whom with vestal care she would cherish the dignity of virtue, declare it but an empty name, and an undue restraint imposed upon inclinations implanted in our nature?

Can it be nothing, that he who should be the guardian of my principles, and of the conduct which flows from them, should be the very being who derides their only effectual safeguard; and who, from his professed system, must be indifferent to their violation? And, finally,—ah! say, what happiness can be the possession of that woman, who, when she praises her God for past mercies and supplicates for their continuance, cannot, while the holy gratitude warms her own heart, know she has ever in her husband an associate in that feeling, which is the genuine source of all those that are pure and permanent; who cannot in

his bosom find a sanctuary (where they may repose inviolate), for every pure, holy, and sublime thought of *her* own?

I am aware, my Albert, that you may be both surprised and indignant at the unlooked-for remonstrance contained in this letter, in which it is probable you expect but to find a renewal of my oft repeated vows; but your remarks upon a dejection, I was powerless to conceal, when you quitted us, have obliged me to an explanation perhaps premature.

To give it verbally I found impossible, without betraying to others, what you already are well acquainted with,—the empire you have over every feeling of my soul.

An attachment, formed in early youth, sanctioned by the sacred confirmation of a parent's approbation,—that has been to me so many years “the very sunshine of my soul;” which

strengthened, day by day, till it became it's very aliment: to have this blissful vision, in one dark moment, dispelled,—this object of my pure idolatry, no longer that of which I may safely be a votary,—has at once awakened the keenest feelings; at once subdued my courage, and deprived me of the power of speaking upon the subject; I have therefore taken the opportunity of the separation which the prosecution of your professional studies renders unavoidable at present, to open to you my agonized heart.—Eugenia *dares* not ratify her engagement with her beloved Albert, while he denies the existence of that Being she must *alone* invoke to bless it. She dares not commit her happiness to *his* keeping, who virtually, by his system, declares, love is but the transient flower of this bleak clime, the world,—is here alone to bloom, to wither, and to die,—to *revive no more!* How different, Albert, were once your sentiments! When the thought of it's perpetuity beyond the narrow limits of existence,

seemed to exalt; and to give a sacred character to our human attachment.

Have you no retrospective views of that happy past? Are you not sometimes involuntarily led back to those sublime contemplations with which you were once conversant, when under the affectionate and pious instruction of my beloved father, and your revered tutor?—alas! for us, removed too soon to the rewards of his blameless life.

Let me beseech you, my Albert, to reflect upon that period:—

“Go to those happy fields, where first we twin’d
“Our youthful hearts together; every wind
“That meets thee *there*, fresh from the well-known flow’rs,
“Will bring the sweetness of those innocent hours
“Back to thy soul.”—

(*Lalla Rookh*.—MOORE.)

But I forbear,—it is not your mere feelings I wish to awaken, but your slumbering reason

I would rouse. The one I know may burn brightly for a while, refreshed by my aid, but as swiftly expire; the other, though in itself a glimmering ray, too feeble and imperfect to guide us in our doubtful and intricate path, will assuredly, if humbly exercised, lead us upward to that "better and brighter day," over which neither darkness nor gloom shall lour, to excite our fears, and discourage our hopes. Hear then, oh hear, thy Eugenia's voice! Remember her "weal or woe depends upon thy resolve."—She now trembles at the issue. For *her sake, love thyself.*

"Let love and emulation rise in aid

"To reason, and persuade thee *to be blest.*"

YOUNG.

That it may be so, is the ceaseless prayer
of the

Devoted

EUGENIA.

LETTER II.

EUGENIA to ALBERT.

WHEN I recently addressed you, my dear friend, upon a subject which pressed painfully on my heart, every sentiment of which has so long been habitually unfolded, and perfectly known to you, I prepared myself for your surprise, your indignation, and even your raillery, but not for your reproaches. Never could I think that Albert would one moment harbour the thought, that Eugenia wished to retract the solemn promises she had made, the vows she had pledged in the sight of heaven,—and not in her view less irrevocable than if they

had been sanctioned by her country's laws: In full force do those vows still, in willing bondage, bind my soul; but their public and solemn ratification must be suspended till I am assured they may be so confirmed with safety to my present well-being and eternal happiness, without the hazard of making shipwreck of my own peace, by vain endeavours to effect what I am assured you cannot long enjoy, while cherishing your present sentiments.

But of this, no more,—for my heart disclaims the imputations of caprice and unfaithfulness.

When you, with a levity, certainly, my dear Albert, ill-suited to the subject; say, that “although your opinions clash with that simplicity which is so infinitely becoming to me; and being one of my greatest charms in your eyes, that you shall never seek to invade it; so it ought not to excite any fear of undue influence in my breast.” “Still,” (you add) “you must

remind me, it renders me incapable of judging of the more enlarged ideas of those who have thrown aside such antiquated notions, which do not appear often in such grace as in your Eugenia." Perhaps, when you say this, you think you have banished all just apprehension from a heart, you have ever found ready to give credence to your assurances.

Perhaps when you laugh at the gloomy picture I have drawn of a matrimonial life, under the circumstances detailed in my last, and challenge me to prove in what possible manner the opinions you now hold can be inimical to your own happiness and virtue, or are likely to endanger mine, perhaps you did not imagine I should dare to take up the gauntlet;—that I, an inexperienced, trembling, and feeble combatant, would unhesitatingly enter the lists with an adversary, in all points, so superior,—one, before whose genius I have been wont to bow. Unaffectedly diffident as I am in my

own power,—and, if I know my own heart, devoid of that culpable vanity which would obtrude willingly upon a subject I am unable to discuss, but through the medium and by the aid of feeling, yet bold in that imparted strength for which I fervently supplicate, confident in the inherent strength of my cause, I dare endeavour to substantiate my assertions, that your present structure of happiness has no solid basis; that the slightest storm of the passions will have power to make it tremble from the foundation; that it is raised in weakness, and must in the clash of contending interests, inseparable from human circumstances, become a lamented ruin. That making feeling only the rule of your actions, they must inevitably be inconsistent and inconstant, have but little virtue in their present exercise, and offering not a single guarantee for their future display; as it may pass as a meteor to enliven for a moment, but be seen no more. Therefore, in order to secure the stability of the one, and to give force, con-

sistency, and constancy to the other, to form social good, and ensure private and individual happiness, the aid of *Religion* is absolutely necessary.

In doing this, however feebly, I must, my dear Albert, oppose, in every point, your present system; but, *as you value the issue*, even only so far as relates to myself, have patience with me, and reject not what I shall urge in the spirit of affection, until you have maturely reflected upon it.

And, oh! if the soft affections of the soul, if the zealous love of a devoted heart, are permitted to be the ministers of good to a beloved being, how great may be the hope of Eugenia, that she may indeed prevail with her Albert to believe

"The virtues grow on immortality,—

"*That root destroy'd, they wither and expire.*"

YOUNG.

When I speak of Religion, of course I mean Christianity; and that form of it which was inculcated on our youthful hearts by my beloved parents, and which I need not remind you was adorned by their bright example.—I mean that form which is distinguished as the Established Church of our native land; and which, according to the opinion of the greatest and best men of former and present times, is pure, moderate, and rational,—equally addressing the affections of the heart, and exercising the powers of the mind; which breathes the spirit of that divine Revelation upon which it is founded, and according to the rules of which it is framed; viz. uniting, in it's promises and precepts, the sublimest spiritual blessings and the purest code of morality,—the softest spirit of charity, with the sternest principles of un-sinful virtue,—the tenderest pity for human infirmity, with the most awful exhortations against careless security and wilful error:—containing no vain disquisitions to perplex the

judgment, but plain doctrines to teach us our duty, and clear directions to pursue the difficult and devious paths of this world, combined with hopes to animate the coldest heart to seek another.

To this Religion, and to this modification of it, not prejudice, but early precept, exalted example, calm reflection, warm affections, experience of it's consoling and renewing power in others and myself, and a firm conviction of it's divine origin and merciful end, have attached me, not with a bigot's violence, but with a Christian's feelings,—which prompt me to desire the blessing I myself taste in the knowledge of it (however imperfectly I practise it), may also be the portion of others, more especially of those I love.

Of this Religion, then, I purpose, most diffidently to speak,—unawed, however, by the thought, I am addressing one whose more en-

lightened intellect has bid it away from him as a nursery tale, unworthy manly attention!

I shall address myself to you, my dear Albert; as one who has never duly considered the subject; and of course must solicit the exercise of your candour and patience, when I dwell with prolixity upon what you already are entirely acquainted with. I contend not for your deficiency of knowledge, but for your choice,—and erroneous opinions, when you question the importance of religious sentiments to society in general, and to individuals in particular; and of it's salutary influence on public good, and private happiness.

This importance, and this influence, I would endeavour to prove: upon the former, indeed, I must necessarily speak very superficially, and with peculiar diffidence; my age, and narrow field of observation, rendering me little able to touch upon it.

Yet, as you know I have been taught to consider it disgraceful to be entirely ignorant of any thing which affected the well-being of those around me, and it is in many respects blended with that part of my purposed subject of correspondence, upon which I can, from personal experience, speak more confidently,—I will not pass it over altogether without notice.

Perhaps, however, you may think this unnecessary; as you have *admitted*, that “religious sentiments are essential, as political agents to ensure the preservation of public order.” But, Albert, you seem to forget, while admitting this, that if the refined and more elevated members of society disregard the obligations of Religion, and openly deny the existence of the Being from whom it emanates, and to whom it guides,—the more ignorant and humble classes (upon whose actions example has so powerful an influence), will soon inevitably imbibe the same sentiments; and thus you are, by your

system, destroying that which you admit is a necessary check to the passions of the vulgar, and an essential agent of your power over the inferior classes of the community;—thus you are, by your system, exterminating the very principle which makes the individuals of those classes conform to their dependent state, and to rest contented with the inferior lot assigned them; thus you relax, nay absolutely sever, the necessary bonds of society, when you deny man is an accountable being,—and destroy all that is valuable, in a life doomed to dependence and poverty, and perhaps to every other human ill, when you cruelly close the bright avenues of hope that conduct the sinking soul from present evil to future good; and thus you debase his very nature, when you teach him the dreadful doctrine, that the soul (which unites the humblest individual to the Deity himself!) is neither immaterial nor immortal, but that man is created for enjoyment, and to perish like the brute!

Can you calmly do this, and yet call yourself a philanthropist? Assuredly not:—and most undoubtedly, also, your policy is equally ill-founded; for it is too sure, that society would quickly become a chaos of wild opinions and misguided passions, of discordant sentiments and unblushing crime, without the regulating spring, which acts unseen, but powerfully, on the consciences of individuals, through the impressions formed by Religion, and the rewards and punishments which it discloses. It is this divine sentiment of Religion, acting by it's internal vicegerent, which maintains the order of society, because it's influence extends to the very root of those actions of which the law can take no cognizance, even to our very thoughts and motives. By presenting to our mental view an omniscient and omnipresent Deity, Religion and conscience exercise a quiet habitual authority over men; and, in fact, their empire extends over every circumstance and situation of life, while their influence reaches even to

those thousand imperfections which must inevitably be found inseparable from the purest code of human laws; and supplies every deficiency of human government. Let every one beware, therefore, how they seek to overturn authorities so active; let them beware how they weaken that authority in the eyes of men, and teach them to repose with security on the stormy billow of opinion, when the social bark has not Religion to regulate it. Chimerical indeed is the idea, even to those little acquainted with the springs of human action, that it is possible to restrain a human being, hurried on by a high-wrought imagination and impetuous passions (and individuals of that character are confined to no class); chimerical indeed is the idea, that such an individual can be restrained in his course, by recalling to his mind some complicated principles and instructions, formed and laid down by the abstracted philosopher; the result of much study perhaps, but in total ignorance, real or feigned, of the force of the

tide to be arrested, and of the numerous streams into which it divides itself, to elude the counteracting force.

It has been most justly remarked by an eminent writer, from whom I have derived much of my theoretical knowledge upon the subject that now engages our attention, that "morality is not like other sciences, a knowledge that we may be at liberty to acquire at our leisure: the quickest instruction in it is too slow, as man has a natural power of doing evil before his mind is in a state to apply reflection. Religion alone has the power to persuade with celerity, because it elevates the affections, and excites without inflaming the passions; because, while it informs the understanding, it ameliorates the heart; and, above all, because it speaks in the name of God; and it is easy to inspire respect of Him, whose power and goodness are every where apparent,—equally evident to the eyes of the simple and the learned,

to the eyes of childhood and to those of maturity." What are precepts, or general considerations of utility and expediency, to the idea of an all-powerful God pervading the whole creation; who, although enveloped in clouds, is yet manifested in his works, and the operations of his providence; who, we are assured, pierces to the bottom of the hearts he has formed, and regards every action that springs from them; who, we are assured, looks with complacent eye upon every sacrifice of our own inclinations, made in obedience to his revealed will?

Those who ascribe force to general sentiments of utility and expediency, to maintain morality of conduct, ungratefully forget, that, from the very spirit of the Religion they wish to destroy, this force is actually derived. Even humanity, the boast of the Infidel, derives it's real strength, it's genuine excellence, from the idea of a Supreme Being, essentially depending (if true, just, sincere, and constant), on our mu-

tual connection with the same omniscient Judge, the condemner of our evil actions, the rewarder of our virtues, and the inspirer of our hopes. Feeble, fluctuating, and evanescent is that humanity which has not this origin, that feels not this participation. What a scene of disorder, misery, and crime would open upon us, if we had only political morality for our guide, we have seen displayed in *regenerated* France;—that horrible scene, the realising of those principles inculcated by modern sophists, principles as impious as they are hollow and deceitful,—which make political reasoning our only guide, and the passions of nature our only law!

Has not that tremendous revolution sufficiently manifested how prone man is to evil, and how many opportunities he possesses of injuring himself and others, unless restrained by some internal counteracting force? To imagine it possible to subject men to the observance of public order, and to inspire them with the love

of virtue, by any motives independent of Religion and the belief of a God, is like the perverted vision of a maniac, an illusion which must surprise those not labouring under it, but exciting the profoundest pity for those unhappy beings who are so deceived.

You have, my dear friend, indirectly said, that the desire of praise and esteem, and the fear of contempt and shame, are powerful springs, which actuate the movements of men. It is granted that they are so. But suffer me to remind you, their force has been tried in revolutionary France, and found ineffective;—hence the decree of the Convention: “The French people acknowledge the existence of a God, and the immortality of the soul.” But if this practical contradiction to your theory could not be adduced, it would not be difficult to prove the fallacy of it, by drawing a comparison between the influence of opinion, upon which you with such confidence depend as a regulator

and corrector of morals, and that which belongs to Religion; and in doing this, I shall avail myself of some remarks of the eminent writer before quoted, who had ample and melancholy opportunities of forming a correct judgment.

But first, I would remark, without apology for my prolixity, that the influence of the world's opinion must be greatly inferior to that of religious sentiment, inasmuch as it can only be exercised in a confined space; since it can only take cognizance of those acts which affect the public interests *directly*, and must necessarily leave unnoticed all those reprehensible violations affecting society *indirectly*, and which are committed with impunity, because secretly and totally independent of the fear of the world's opinion; while they surely, but insensibly, poison the springs of morality.

How, then, can this partial ascendancy be justly put in comparison with that derived

from those principles, those grand truths which penetrate the heart of every human being, detecting the errors, correcting the inclinations, imparting consolation, presenting the sweet form of hope, and asserting it's dominion only to sanctify, to sustain, to comfort, and to invigorate the human heart?

But let us examine the difference of these several agents, in nearly the words of the author who has drawn the comparison.

“Fame (he observes) only recompenses rare actions, and would have nothing to bestow upon a nation of heroes.

“Religion tends continually to render virtue common, yet the universal success of it's instructions would take nothing from the value or the abundance of it's benefits.

“To receive the rewards of the world, men

must appear with splendour on it's stage. Religion, on the contrary, bestows it's most distinguished favours on those who despise praise, and who do good in secret.

“The world requires that talents and knowledge should accompany virtue; and it is thus that the love of praise becomes the spring of our actions.

“Religion never imposes this condition,—it's recompences belong to the ignorant, as well as to the learned; to the humble spirit, as well as to the exalted genius; and it is in animating all men, in exciting universal activity, that it effectually concurs to the maintenance of civil order.

“The world, only judging of actions in a state of maturity, takes not any account of efforts; and, as men do not seize the palm till the moment when they reach the goal, it is necessary at the commencement of the career,

that every one should derive from his own force his courage and perseverance. Religion, on the contrary, if I may say so, dwells with us from the moment when we begin to think: it welcomes our intentions, strengthens our resolutions, and supports us even in the hour of temptation. It is at all times, and in all situations, that we experience it's influence, as we are continually reminded of it's rewards.

“Fame, distributing only favours whose principal value arises from comparisons and competitions, often draws on it's favorites the envenomed breath of slander; and then sometimes they doubt about their real value, and find them unsatisfactory. Religion mingles no bitterness with it's reward; it is in obscurity that it confers content; and as it has treasures for all the world, what is granted to some never impoverishes others.

“The world is often mistaken in it's judg-

ment; because, in the midst of so large a circle, it is often difficult to distinguish true merit and the splendour which follows it, from the false colours of hypocrisy. Religion extends it's influence to the very recesses of the heart; and places there an observer who has a closer view of man than their actions afford, and whom they cannot either deceive or surprise.

“ There are also moments in which the opinion of the world loses it's force, and becomes enervated, or governed by a servile spirit; it searches to find fault with the oppressed, and attributes grand intentions to powerful men, that it may without shame abandon one, and celebrate the other. Ah! it is in such moments, we return with delight to the precepts of Religion,—to those independent principles, which, while they illustrate every thing deserving of esteem or contempt, enable us to follow the dictates of our heart, and speak according to our conscience!

“Thus the opinion of the world, which unites so many motives to excite men to distinguished actions, and to exalt them even to the greatest virtues, still ought *never* to be compared with the universal, invariable influence of Religion, and with those sentiments which its precepts inspire men of all ages, of all conditions, and every degree of understanding.”

In addition to these remarks, I do not hesitate, my dear Albert, to say, even from imperfect although actual observation and experience, that the opinion of the world alone, is powerless to restrain the will of man. That the esteem and contempt, the honour and shame, upon which so much power is conferred by your system, are so far from being able to supply the place of religious influence, that it is those very sentiments which confirm the opinion of the world, and, more or less, obviously direct it. A truth, however, which, with consistent ingratitude, the Infidel refuses to see. Soon would those

who wish to form every thing on human and political calculations,—soon would they experience, that these short-sighted calculations would destroy the very structure they were intended to support. Soon would they find, that, morality deprived of it's true basis, it would be vain to attempt it's support by laws and diversity of opinions,—for ever fluctuating, and tending to no end but self-interest. But make Religion the foundation, every thing will become firmly established. “It surrounds” (as has been beautifully remarked), “the whole system of morality, resembling that universal and mysterious force of physical nature, which retains the planets in their orbits, and subjects them to a regular revolution; but which, in the midst of the general order it maintains, escapes the observation of men, and appears to their feeble sight unconscious of it's own work.”

But I am summoned, my dear Albert, from pursuing the subject further at present, by

being obliged to attend my kind Uncle, in an engagement he has formed, with the view of giving me pleasure. Yet alas! the interest she feels in her self-imposed task, makes every other mode of passing her time tasteless,—nay most irksome, to the

Faithful

EUGENIA.

LETTER III.

EUGENIA to ALBERT.

YEs, my dear Albert, I am content to be styled an enthusiast, since you assure me "you will attend to my reveries;" although I should have been better pleased had that assurance been unaccompanied by those compliments which offend my mind, however flattering they be to my personal vanity,—and are, in fact, unworthy of the dignity and sincerity of the love which unites us. Yes, I *am* content to be called an enthusiast, although I am perfectly aware, you construe the term by that of a fanatic: yet, a writer, with whom you are well acquainted,

and whom I believe you admire, remarks, I think most justly, "that enthusiasm alone counterbalances the tendency of man to selfishness; and it is by this divine sign, we recognize the creatures of immortality."*

But without disputing upon the difference of that feeling combining so many others, and that exclusive passion—fanaticism, I will merely express my surprise, that any one should reject with displeasure the imputation of enthusiasm when applied to the sentiment of Religion, and upon other subjects even proudly acknowledge its existence. What musician, for instance, but is flattered in being thought an enthusiast, although, perhaps, his soul is far from being really attuned to harmony?

The painter earnestly desires to be ranked an enthusiast in his art, although he may actually be but a feeble judge, and possess but

* Staël.

little taste for harmony of colouring and justness of proportion? What poet but wishes to be thought an enthusiast, although the stream of his genius may be shallow and uncertain in its course, and he may be dead to the real sublimity of numbers? the patriot, also, in his cause, proudly professes his enthusiasm, although it may be neither just nor right. Shall, then, enthusiasm be admirable in every thing which pleases the fancy and engages the intellect,—and shall Religion be the only sentiment upon which we dare not avow the warmth of our feelings? Forbid it, gratitude! is the reply of all those who have experienced its power, to call forth and to exalt every affection.

It is reserved for those who deny, or are wilfully ignorant of it, to scoff at the warmth it communicates to the soul. For ridicule and sarcasm are the missiles of the Infidel, upon which he most relies in his cruel warfare against the happiness of his fellow-beings!

Accustomed to communicate every thought, as it spontaneously arises in my mind, to you, my dear Albert, I will not now apologize for the above digression from the subject more immediately under discussion; which I will now resume. In reply to my assertion, that Religion is the essential basis of morality, without which it cannot subsist; you say, you "are able to controvert my theory, from your own actual observation and experience, independent of that which is personal; for, in your intercourse with the world, you have met with very many individuals divested of every kind of *prejudice*, and believing not in a Supreme Being,—and yet whose conduct was as regular, and sentiments as pure, as those of the most religious." You further state, that "this observation had confirmed your previous opinion, that man has a native tendency to justice, goodness, and virtue; which happy inclinations, fostered by a judicious education, may easily be preserved, without having recourse to the dogmas of Re-

ligion." Now, my dear friend, suffer me to inquire, in reference to the first clause of your observation, if those persons of whom you speak have not, like yourself, been prepared in early life, by the very Religion whose yoke they have thrown off, to respect virtue ?

Early principles have a great influence on the human mind. The soul formed to the love of order, as the reason begins to dawn, cannot easily be reduced to chaos ; but is sustained in this disposition by the force of example and habit. In fact, *never* (and I cling with delight to the assurance), *never* entirely loses this regulating principle.

Besides, while Religion is still revered by the majority, the respect for morality is in proportion ; consequently, even those who reject their obligations, at the same time know and feel, that probity alone can lead to esteem, and to it's consequent advantages. A virtuous

Atheist, then, does but remind us of the indirect influence of those religious sentiments which he spurns, but is far from convincing a reasonable mind of their folly and inefficacy. But even if it were so, that the refined man of the world, and the solitary thinker, would require no Religion to check or to regulate them, yet the vulgar are not to be so guided. The only system proportionate to the *various* classes of intelligence, found in the different ranks of society, is that which applies with equal impartiality to all. Again, you say "it is absurd to suppose Religion is necessary to make a man honest," &c. "to make him such, the dictates of his heart will always be sufficient to direct him." This is very plausible; but, alas! proves only the presumption of the individual who rests upon it as a guide of conduct. It may, indeed, to a certain degree, do for an unchangeable and passionless world, but surely not for one of mutability and temptation.

These men, to a certain degree, succeed with them, notwithstanding previous reflection, studies, and exertions have shed a calm repose;—with those who have never, or nearly so, been intensely engaged in their arduous pursuits, or involved in the absorbing interests that surround society,—of those who have never been subject to its fluctuations, and are unacquainted with the vicissitudes of prosperity and adversity, of joy and of sorrow.

But I would ask, how shall such men determine who under such circumstances have used the aid of Religion unnecessary? how shall they determine how they would act, if, without any other resting place than their reason, principles, and no other guide but conscience and expediency, they had to oppose its arguments and counter temptations which present themselves at every step of our earthly progress? How assuredly they would neglect the duties of their own imagination,

if they believe, that, "because they are at the same time irreligious by system, and just by character and habit," there is not a necessary and indissoluble connection between Religion and virtue. Such ideas can only spring from a culpable self-love, or the *enthusiasm* of false philosophy, grounded upon the ill-founded pride which is it's invariable concomitant.

As to the last part of your observation, it must in it's very nature be always subject to debate; for as education and habit may be said to commence with the birth of the individual, it will ever be impossible to ascertain, *distinctly*, dispositions which are purely innate, or to judge of their different modifications by the various influences they are (even before we perceive it) subjected to by education. But that the innate dispositions have a *tendency to good*, is contrary to the assurance of *Hume* "who knew what was in man;" as ~~an~~ *an* ~~assertion~~ *assertion* which

is but too fully proved by painful experience, making further argument unnecessary.

Another objection, which has been made with confidence by the enemies of Religion (and apparently very justly), against it's sanctifying and regulating power, is drawn from the licentious lives of many of it's professors.

Undoubtedly, it is too frequently found that it's precepts and doctrines do not succeed, as they ought and have power, in stemming at all times the violence of passion; yet this does not prove that they are not really the most efficacious to repel them. There must ever be in society, even where Religion has great influence, many vicious men, who impiously profess it, yet virtually deny it by their actions; these are the worst enemies of this divine director and consoler of man. But surely it is not just to deny the power, and to discredit Religion, by contemplating a picture of vices,

crimes, and hypocrisy, from which it has not had power entirely to guard society: for it should never be forgotten, that Religion does not act by a mechanical force, the success of which may be exactly calculated by the strength of the opposing power; that it has not a passive being to resist,—but that it's efficacy must greatly depend upon the various modifications of sensibility, disposition, and passion, which severally actuate the different individuals who form the aggregate of society, and the degree of effort used by them in the conflicts they are exposed to. Therefore, instead of remarking upon the vices and disorders it has not been able to prevent, let us rather more justly fix our attention upon those which it checks.

In other words, let not the impious abuses of it's power, but the faithful use of it, be our criterion, in estimating it's value. Let us not unjustly confound the unfavourable instances of it's failure, with the general benefits arising

from the exercise of *any* principle, more especially that of such vital importance, which I now endeavour to advocate.

“How easy sits this scheme on human hearts!

“It suits their make, it soothes their vast desires;

“Passion is pleas’d, and reason asks no more:

“‘Tis rational! ’tis great! — but what is thine?

“It darkens! shocks! excruciates! and confounds!

“Sinking from bad to worse; — few years the sport

“Of fortune, then the victim* of despair.”

YOUNG.

The objections formed against the power and influence of Religion, as the basis of morals and the source of happiness, founded upon the languor and indifference with which it is received and encouraged by the world in general, would be found, upon examination, equally inconclusive as those already adverted to. We should rather be led, by this very languor and coldness, to infer, that, if society receives so much benefit as it really does from the partial ex-

* Morael—in the original.

ercise of the principle, how much might be expected from an universal acceptance of it's doctrines. To argue against it, therefore, from it's imperfect and partial influence, is but to shew how far from the point we may wander, when we enter the vague and uncertain path of scepticism and metaphysical discussion, leaving

“ Truths that wake
“ To perish never :
“ Which neither listlessness nor mad endeavour,
“ Nor man, nor boy,
“ Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
“ Can utterly abolish or destroy.”

WORDSWORTH.

Truths which find a hallowed connection with all noble minds ; that shed their vivifying spirit over every department of life, humanizing, purifying, and animating the whole.

No, it is not, it can never be in the power of a few irregularly formed but powerful minds,

who proudly seek celebrity by straying from the common road of happiness, and who boast of their wanderings, to entice the unwary into the same devious paths they have chosen,—it is not for them to destroy the glorious light of religious truth, although they may seek to obscure it, or render it bewildering, by turning it upon imagined defects; who, in the senseless pride of forming a system, labour to subvert every thing which gives confidence and happiness to the heart, and consistency and stability to the conduct of man, by boldly declaring that the beautiful harmony which pervades the world, that stamp of an eternal intelligence, is but a “fortuitous collision, a play of atoms, agitated by a blind movement;” that the Gospel presents no other advantage than that of being a good code of morality; and that it is the grossest superstition to imagine that “the sufferings and death of an unoffending individual, and of one, too, who pretended to be nothing less than the Son of God, could in any

way contribute to the salvation of a guilty world," even supposing such a sacrifice had been required. Happily, however, for mankind, these infidel notions are so uncongenial with human wants and human feelings, that they carry their own antidote with them; and the ways of God are vindicated to man, even by his internal feelings, had he no other proofs to assure him of their wisdom and boundless mercy.

Yet, external proofs can never be wanting, but to those who wilfully blind themselves from the observation. It must in every society be apparent, that, however well the various springs which regulate the machine of government may be arranged and conducted, yet without the vital influence of Religion pervading the whole, it's movements will be obstructed, it's effects fail, and the benefits which would result from the free and harmonious operation of it's several parts would quickly be lost.

Arguments might be advanced, *ad infinitum*, upon the subject; but, my dear Albert, they must surely be unnecessary to you, whose acuteness and observation must eventually discard with indignation that veil which now obscures your mental vision: yes, a time will assuredly arrive, when that which you now cherish as a conviction, will be found and acknowledged by you but a wavering and vague opinion, supported only by self-love, and a vain desire of distinction. But, my Albert, let me beseech you to have a nobler aim, reassume the dignity of your nature, which your cold and comfortless system debases.

Is it for man, who partakes of the Divinity, to degrade himself to the condition of the brute creation?—made to rise and expatiate over the high and glorious works of an all-powerful and all-wise Being, can he wilfully bear down the aspirations of his soul, and chain it's affections to the earth? And is this what you would per-

suade us to do? is this the grovelling system you would give us in exchange for that which assures us of life, and light, and joy? Yet, if you will still refuse to open your eyes to that resplendent light which shines around you,—if the voice of nature cannot arrest your attention,—if your heart boasts it's insensibility to the most affecting, and ceases to glow with the most sublime sentiments,—if you prefer trusting to your own feeble reason, rather than listen to the clear but still small voice within you,—if you can, in fine, enjoy happiness in the dark circle you have drawn around you, at least have pity on your fellow-men, nor seek to lay the fatal spell upon them. Prove, at least, your sincerity, by warning them, if they enter that dreadful circle, they must

“All hope abandon!”

And, Albert! forgive her, who never yet departed from that sincerity which is the essence of friendship, when she adds, in con-

clusion, those awful words, which so justly apply to human sophists:—

“ Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled: this ye shall have of mine hand,—*ye shall lie down in sorrow.*”

May the God of mercy avert this fate from him who has received the voluntary vows of the once confiding and happy, but now most unhappy

EUGENIA.

LETTER IV.

EUGENIA to ALBERT.

You say, my dear Albert, that “the earnestness of the little preacher gives an interest to the subject treated on, which makes you hail the receipt of a packet, although it bears you no hope. that her relentless heart is softened towards you.” I hail this curiosity as a happy omen.

Thou say'st I preach, my Albert,—'tis confess;

Oh! for the pow'r to preach thee into thought.

“Think me not unkind,—

“I would not damp, but to secure thy joys!”

Having already traced the necessity of religious opinions to society at large, I now presume

to speak of them as essential to form the happiness of the individual: and, in doing this, if I should appear to bear severely upon your avowed sentiments, pardon the act in consideration of the motive.

“ Let thy pride pardon, what thy nature needs,
“ The salutary censure of a friend.”

It has ever appeared to me, that those who encourage the cold maxims of infidelity, have never thought how many sources of happiness would be closed, were they generally to prevail; how many causes of enjoyment, how many balms to anxiety, would then be taken from us! If they thus thought, surely it would be impossible for them to stifle that pity which seems inherent in the heart of man, to preserve the moral order of the world; and which dictates (to use the beautiful expression of an eminent writer), that “ man, who can only catch at fugitive moments, at accidental occasions, should never forego doing all the partial

good, which circumstances may enable him to diffuse." To resist the influence of this softening principle, argues a degree of depravity, which, pardon me if I add, can only be found in the heart of an Infidel. To prove it a joyless, dark, and debasing system, we need but to consider some of our moral affections (to enumerate all would lead the discussion far beyond my ability and limits), and the influence which the future has upon them. Even that which we call our present happiness will be found to owe it's principal value, and even reality, to it's connection with futurity.

Vague hope, bearing away our imagination, causes the expected good, which we annex to various satisfactions, frequently to be the *essence* of our present happiness.

Thus indirectly, and scarcely without our being sensible of it, our moral existence is in perspective. We find it vain to separate the

present from the delusions of hope which surround us, and, though continually deluded, are still seduced by the visions.

If then our thoughts, like the waves of the rising ocean, are ever active, ever pressing forwards; if our present enjoyments have an imaginary tie upon the future,—how beautifully does it lead us to that system of hope, built upon the basis of revealed Religion, and to that strong internal general sentiment—the *desire* of prolonging our existence; and what a refuge does it present, from the overwhelming thought of annihilation!

Most certainly, it greatly depends upon the dispositions and opinions of men, whether they receive with grateful confidence, or treat with contempt and neglect, the hopes which Religion presents; but doubt and obscurity are revolting to the heart of man, and where can they fix, if the idea of a God is destroyed, and those

internal sentiments, which inform men of the spirituality of their souls, were stifled as they spontaneously arose to comfort and to cheer the heart?

It has been remarked, with no less beauty than truth, "When, in following the course of a noble river, a vast horizon is presented to our view, we turn not our observation on the sandy banks we are coasting; but, if changing our situation, or twilight narrowing this horizon, our attention was turned upon the barren flat we were near, then only should we remark all it's dryness and sterility.

"It is the same in the career of life; when the grand ideas of eternity elevate our thoughts and our hopes, we are less affected by the weariness and difficulties strewed in our path; but if, *changing our principles* (mark this, dear Albert!) a gloomy philosophy were to obscure our perspective, our whole attention drawn back to sur-

rounding objects, we should then very distinctly discover the void and illusion of the satisfactions, of which our moral nature is susceptible." Let us, then, receive with gratitude the happiness which is presented to us by Religion, and the reflections which attend it; that, continually drawing us towards the future, redeem from the present moment "the purest part of ourselves," the sweetest enchantments of the moral world; and let us reflect on the fatal consequences of destroying the sentiment that forms them.

The interest and the charm of our existence would inevitably be lost, if we were to do so.— Can any thing be indifferent, when it is considered as a duty, and has for its object a virtuous end? Can any thing be indifferent, when, in the exercise and improvement of our faculties, we believe we are commencing and pursuing a progress of improvement, which will be receiving accession through endless ages?

Would those ardent impulses towards the great and good, which are ever working in the human heart, convey a conscious dignity to the soul, were they not to be regarded as pledges of an after life?

What satisfaction could be tasted in the knowledge of all science, of every thing that occupies, but never fills the capacity of man, if there is no accompanying hope of futurity? What pleasure could that pursuit afford, which offered no hope, remote or near, of accomplishment? and to know we can but taste of the small streams, flowing through innumerable obstructions from some capacious fountain, concealed from our view, although an insatiable desire prompts us eagerly to seek it. A future state disclosed, we are immediately gratified with the sight of this ever-flowing fountain, opened unrestrained to our thirsty lips.

“ Life has no value as an end,—but means ;

“ An end deplorable! a means divine! ”

————— “ Compare it with the moon,
“ Dark in herself, and indigent ; but rich
“ In borrow'd lustre, from a higher sphere.”

Young.

It is granted, that a few short years of youth and health, that sunny season of joy and thoughtlessness, may be passed, in the pleasures of sense and the eagerness of desire, without absolutely feeling, in the moments of illusion, the want of religious sentiments as a source of happiness ; although they would unquestionably give zest to every pleasure, and add brightness to every joy. But how small a portion of life is thus passed, even by the most happy in the world's estimation ? How transient the illusions of youth, and how painful the moment when they are dispelled by the realities of experience ! How painful to find ourselves destitute of every resource to succeed the gay dreams of early life,—to find nothing to comfort, nothing to encourage:—to

know the past can never return,—yet to have nothing to anticipate in this or a future world!

Nothing, then, can be more unjust than to accuse Religion of rendering the pursuits of life uninteresting and monotonous; when, in truth, it is that alone which gives to existence it's pleasures, and to it's business any real interest, by connecting it with another,—and from the idea of perpetuity it presents to the mind; which, at the same time that it sustains our hope, invests the duties of life with importance, and renders sacred all it's affections.

What would become of the most delightful and sublime of all emotions—admiration, if we contemned Religion, and, it's grand basis, the being of a God? If, when we feasted our eyes upon the glories of the external world, no idea of a Supreme Architect presented itself, but we only traced a vast scene without cause, design, or destination?

We may, indeed, be involuntarily overpowered by the magnificence which surrounds us; but he who believes a God, makes it the sanctuary of his soul's devotion. But to pursue this question somewhat further, how infinitely is the pleasure, derived from the contemplation of the power of God manifested in the creation, augmented in the bosom of a Christian?—How is that cheerfulness and joy, that awful delight he experiences, purified and exalted, when he turns from the glorious display,—from what gratifies his senses and elevates his thought, to that majestic but consoling exhibition of wisdom and goodness, displayed in the dispensation upon which he rests his hope?—to those free and undeserved benefits of Redemption; promised to all, without reserve or partiality, like the blessings of light to the material world.

To know that He who lights the heavens with glory, and mantles the earth with beauty, also

regards with never-wearied care the meanest atom he has formed, and has deigned to reveal himself to man under the endearing and encouraging title of a Father, ever attentive to the ultimate happiness of his children; although sometimes, unwillingly, obliged to subject them to discipline. Oh, Albert! be constrained with the power of this tenderness, and yield yourself to those internal suggestions which I am persuaded must sometimes rise in your breast,—once the abode of sentiments so ennobling, so different from those which have usurped their place!

“ Believe, and shew the reason of a man ;

“ Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God ;

“ Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb ! ”

YOUNG.

Then will your now blinded vision dwell with delight on the view opened to us, of exulting goodness and unsearchable wisdom,—in the Christian dispensation; then may we prostrate ourselves in veneration, and love, and gratitude unreserved, before the Almighty Being, whose

wisdom devised, and mercy accomplished, the stupendous act, which reunited the tie that had been severed by disobedience.

Again, suffer me to ask, what if our moral liberty were but a fiction, and we were doomed to the cruel law of necessity,—what would become of the pleasure we invariably find in the development, exercise, and progress of our faculties? of what use our boasted intelligence, but to torment and to mock us? Certainly it would contribute but little to our happiness, and surely must be most mortifying to our pride and self-love, if our study of nature, our active spirit of curiosity, did but teach us, that we are the victims of a mechanical slavery?

“ God made thee perfect, not immutable :

————— “ ordain’d thy will

“ By nature free, not over-rul’d by fate

“ Inextricable, or strict necessity ;

“ Our voluntary service He requires,

“ Not our necessitated,—such with Him

“ Finds no acceptance, nor can find ; for how
“ Can hearts not free, be try'd whether they serve
“ Willing or no,—who will but what they must
“ By destiny, and can no other chuse ? ”

(*Paradise Lost.*)

Albert! and is it indeed true, that oblivion can have drawn her dark veil before those days when we together read, together admired the truth and sublimity of Milton,—together drank the spirit of his wonderful genius? When, with our imaginations kindled, and our thoughts exalted, we have almost believed we were ranging the groves of paradise, and heard the Eternal Spirit whispering amongst it's bowers; while we have scarcely dared to breathe, lest we should dispel the hallowed illusion!—when we have almost envied the happy Adam the converse of his propitious guest; his celestial visitant, his divine instructor,—the mild and gentle Raphael!

Pardon, my friend, this fond reminiscence of

days, alas! gone by; this involuntary digression from my immediate subject;—to which I now return, by changing the scene from a chance-formed world, to contemplate one in all the glory with which it is in reality invested.—A world, the result of a “single and grand thought,” bearing the impress of a supreme eternal intelligence. How pleasing to every pure mind is the contemplation of such a world; how sweetly does the heart of man repose upon the conviction of a great First Cause, whom Revelation informs him is his Friend, his Father, and his God! who requires only his trust and gratitude, in return for all his bounties of nature and of grace. How pleasing to contemplate, with reverential admiration and adoration, a scene so harmonious and noble,—in every view so congenial to the heart of man, when free from perversion. How pleasing to pass from this contemplation to that of the interior world—the mind, with all its various and grand endowments, of which the Deity himself

is at once the supreme source and perfect model; and in the exercise and exaltation of which we become more and more approximated to his eternal intelligence. This is, indeed, a glorious "end to all other ends;" and how, when we meditate upon it, can we forbear recollecting those expressive words—

"Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou soregardest him?"

Would we but allow ourselves to think dispassionately, it must appear as natural as delightful, to yield to the desire of elevating our minds to Him "in whom we live, and move, and have our being;" by exercising our thoughts and improving our faculties, by meditating on his perfections and his love, and the indispensable obligations it imposes upon us to study his will, and to perform it. It is then, and then only, that study becomes truly interesting, and that the progress of knowledge is accompanied by an increase of happiness. How languishing

the sentiments, how fictitious the reasons, how cold the persuasions; and how unsatisfactory the end, which the Infidel finds in his studies, compared with those of the Christian, and the grand end to which he looks; here all is lively in exercise, reasonable in reflection, and true in the end. But it is not only to those whose minds like your's, my Albert, are improved by education and observation, and whose light bark has as yet encountered no storm on the ocean of life, upon whom Religion bestows her peace-giving favours; on the contrary, to those whose minds have never received human culture, and whose path has uniformly been rough and barren of all human good; who are devoid of property, and destitute of resource but by unceasing labour; it is to those that Religion presents her most enchanting views,—for she assures them, that their day of labour and sorrow is but short, and that reward is certain.

Religion teaches them to reconcile every

seeming disproportion of this world, by the simple but most comprehensive idea—"It is the Will of God;" of that God, who they believe watches continually over their lot. Many, indeed, are the popular expressions which might be cited, proving that Religion recalls continually, to the minds of its poor disciples, the sweetest sentiments of consolation and unreserved confidence, in the parental government of their Creator.

What sustaining thoughts the idea of an omnipresent Deity inspire in the poor, borne down by the contempt of the world, I have been able most amply to observe, in the large, populous, but most necessitous village in which I passed my childhood; there I have seen its invigorating power displayed in a thousand affecting instances, which impressed my memory, and sunk deep into my young heart,—leading me, even in the first dawn of my reason, to compare it (forgive the repetition of the figure)

to the sun, who in the distribution of his rays observes neither rank nor fortune. Thus have I often repeated to myself, when returning from a scene of deep calamity and poverty, rendered comparatively light by the hopes of Religion,—thus do we behold the comfort of those sentiments connected with the belief of a God and a Saviour, and the hopes in union with it, become like thy animating beams, thou sun! the property of all ranks, of all conditions!

In society there must necessarily be inequality of condition and possession; but Religion has the *unfailing* power to sweeten the hard disproportion, and to point out it's fitness.

Where then is the boasted compassion of the restless Infidel, when he seeks to remove the only prop of the wretched? who would tell them, when oppression bids the bitter tear to flow, there is no God to note them! who, when the suppliant knee is bended, in confidence of

relief, or of imparted strength to bear, would mock them with the taunt, that their confidence is in vain,—there is no God to listen ! who, when they raise their eyes to heaven, tell them that hope is illusion, their heaven an imagined one, and that there is no world beyond this of grief, of poverty, of disappointment, of death !

Will not the blankness of despair in this case stifle even the heavy groan, and the self-avenging arm be raised; were it not for the horrid and repugnant idea of annihilation, and yet a vague hope that *somewhere* there may be found commiseration, which will dry the tear and listen to the sigh ?

: Let us reverse the picture :—enter with me, ye cruel men, that lowly cottage, exposed to all the winds of heaven, and where poverty, age, and sickness scarcely find shelter from the pitiless storm. Once surrounded by many a vigorous and blooming branch, the now wi-

thered stocks await with patience the storm which shall lay them low, when those branches, severed by the hand of death, shall again be united to the parent stems. See their weak and unequal steps; view them prostrate themselves before an ever-present God, who deigns to visit even their desolate hut, and to mark every sigh that issues therefrom; see them lift up their feeble hands,—and see them forget, in the ardour of their devotion, their past griefs, their present destitution,—to spring forward with heart and mind to a world to come, bright, joyful, and never-changing! See them arise with serenity on their countenance, and a peace, the world can neither give nor take away, in their bosoms. Tranquillity, founded on hope, is infused into their souls:—here is no hypocrisy, no deception; to them the world is nothing,—the world notes not them; death is ready to seize them, but they view his approach without alarm, though not without awe. They, through Religion (be it remembered), have ap-

proached Him who is the fountain of goodness, and whom none ever sought and loved without receiving comfort.

This is no picture of the imagination, but a portrait from the life: oh! that those who despise Religion, who arrogate to themselves superior wisdom, and bring to the bar of their judgment the ways of the Most High,—oh! that they would contemplate this and innumerable other pictures that may be found similar to it, and then acknowledge what is the real value of that knowledge which they pretend can promote happiness superior!

“It is granted,” say you, “that in the instance you have cited, and those which may resemble it, the power and efficacy of Religion may possibly, by mere imagination, mitigate the sufferings of the parties; but, to make the argument fair, you should shew it’s necessity to all.”

Undoubtedly I ought to do this, and most certainly I can; for it's influence is confined to no class of men, or to any solitary circumstance of adversity. To the innocent, the virtuous, and the pure, who are condemned, slandered, or mistaken by the world, is it nothing? Is it not a source of happiness to know, they have a secret witness of their integrity, a record on high, and an enlightened Judge of what is right?

Is it not a source of exquisite happiness to the man of sensibility, when disgusted with the corruptions, fatigued with the contentions, and astonished at the frivolities of the world, to retire into his closet,—and there, with “his reason, his guardian angel, and his God, to hold communion, sweet communion, large and high;” and there renew and purify his sentiments?—The happy idea of his ever-watchful God, softens every feeling, smooths every asperity caused by the view of a vicious society, and

embellishes his path, by associating with it all nature, animate and inanimate ; and he becomes as it were identified with the Deity, by marking his footsteps, and tracing his intentions ! feeling, that insignificant as he is in the vast creation, he yet may contribute to the display of his power, by imitating the splendour of his goodness.

Let those whose hearts are formed for friendship or for love, say, if piety does not invest them with charms they would know not, were they not sanctified by the holy sentiment. Is it not when we are tasting the bliss of reciprocal affection, that the heart clings to and fosters the idea of duration ? but can this world promise it ? is there any thing that marks it as a state of rest and security ? Ah, no ! the most tender union may be severed in a moment.—What *then* but the thought, and firm belief of a God, who implanted the soft affections in our nature, and of a future world where they shall

expand to perfection,—what but this can afford relief? Does not our heart, does not our shuddering frame, shrink *then* from the idea of abhorred annihilation? What! shall all the interests, all the sentiments, all the charms of our existence sink before the stroke of death, never to revive, never to be renewed? Can we a moment bear to connect all these with “a death without hope, a destruction without return?”

Oh, most unhappy being! who cannot, will not hope, that what death has severed will again be united; who, when his whole soul dwells on the recollection of a beloved object, cannot say “his heart so affectionate, his soul so pure and heavenly, now waits for me, and calls me perhaps to be near that great Being, whom we have together adored!” Albert! thou once hadst sensibility; how has it become so indurated that thou shouldst have abandoned the source of so many hopes, so many joys, so many consolations as God and Religion?

With what fervency do I now pray to Him, not to abandon thee to the suggestions of thine own pride and misguided reason; that he would defend thee from the entire ascendancy of a fatal philosophy!

The subject overpowers me, and I lay down my pen for a time.—

I could not resume sufficient fortitude to continue my letter last night, and I hasten to conclude it this morning, ready for the usual conveyance. You have often, dear Albert, called me the child of enthusiasm and reverie, and as often encouraged me to embody my thoughts in numbers.

The wakeful hours of the past night were rendered less tedious by the following attempt, which, as the subject refers in some degree to that discussed in my letter, shall form it's conclusion.

Did but your sentiments respond to mine
upon the subject, I could then subscribe my-
self your

Happy, thrice happy

EUGENIA.

STANZAS.

Where is Happiness to be sought ?

Where does thy form, O Happiness ! reside ;

Dost thou with savage ignorance abide,—

Far from each social scene ?

Or, shall we find thee with the high-wrought mind,

Where ev'ry sentiment most pure, refin'd,

In union sweet is found ?

Dost thou with thoughtless spirits ever dwell,

When they to Mirth's unmeaning laugh impel,

In Dissipation's haunt ?

Art thou with Love and Friendship constant found ?
A vapour* this, and that an empty sound,
That with false pow'r enchant.

Is it, with Fancy's elf, thy sweet employ
To flit continual round *expected* joy,
And scorn the present hour ?
Or, is thy form removed from mortal sight,
To animate our course to realms of light,
And break Death's gloomy pow'r ?

Ah ? let Religion then, thy Sister fair,
Guide us, thou heav'nly Maid, to seek Thee there,
Tho' clouds the portal hide ;
Thus human grief no more, with barbed dart,
Shall, with a *cureless* wound, transfix the heart,
But pointless turn aside !

* Goldsmith.

LETTER V.

EUGENIA to ALBERT.

YOU say, my friend, "every sentiment of your soul is responsive to mine, *save one*,—which is the offspring of prejudice; but in me is found so divested of it's formal and unpleasing nature, and so softened by my tenderness, that, although a weakness, it yet renders me but the more amiable, and more the object of your unbounded love." I repeat your very words, my friend, because I would the more deeply impress upon your mind, that this *single exception* of identity of sentiment is the impassable gulph which separates us! But I must not

suffer myself to dwell upon this point, lest I lose the firmness necessary to continue my self-imposed task; aware too, as I am, that any remonstrance made by a woman, however diffidently, however gentle, or however well-grounded, can offer but little counteraction to the suggestions of pride, the specious blandishments of sophistry, and the misguided zeal of forming or upholding a system,—a system of ethics without Religion for a base! Perhaps you will say, “Why, Religion has no control over the mind, whatever influence it may have upon the heart; our actions may be controlled by necessity, but our minds will *seem* to chuse at least.”*——*I know, I fully admit, that it is left for man to chuse and to determine, whether he prefers darkness to light, death to life, abasement to exaltation; but I also believe he must surely abide the issue of this determination.*

* Here some observation, alluding we believe to the inconsistency of this remark with the doctrine of necessity, was so imperfect in the MS. we do not venture to give it.

"Heav'n wills our happiness, allows our doom,
"Invites us ardently, but *not compels* ;
"Heav'n but persuades,—almighty man decrees :
—— "Man falls by man, if finally he falls ;
"And fall he must, who learns from death alone
"The dreadful secret,—That he lives for ever !"

Young.

Yes, a time will assuredly arrive, when the dreams of ambition, the enticements of fame, the illusions of pleasure, the tumults of passion, and the sophisms of infidelity, with their melancholy triumph over the mind, will all be correctly estimated ; when it will be proved, beyond contradiction, that there was an "omnipotent eye to observe, an omnipotent arm to punish."

You say, that "a little more knowledge of the world would disprove my assertion, that 'Religion is a promoter of happiness,' as it imposes many useless restraints of feeling, necessary to human felicity, and offers (in it's services) nothing equivalent ; that man is not constituted

to find in the hope of future good; that satisfaction he may taste in present indulgence; that it little accords with the benevolence of the Deity, to place a banquet before us and interdict the use of it." I am willing, Albert, to think, that these are not your real sentiments, that they are those of Lord Algernon, I have heard; but, be this as it may, they call for reply, as *you* have expressed them.

It cannot be denied that Religion does oblige us to regulate our passions, and calls us to many a severe conflict; but if we obtain the victory, let any one who has proved the triumph, and also a defeat, judge between us as to the sum of happiness. Let us impartially observe those around us (and a limited field is sufficient for the purpose), let us even enter into the fluctuations of our own bosom, and then pronounce whether, if men were to abandon themselves to their wild propensities, unawed by a fear of responsibility, they would really find the hap-

piness which urged them on. What limits can they give to the disorders of the passions, when they send them in chase of that happiness which flies before them? What happiness can abide in the soul of that man who is borne on by violent impulses, whose dreadful power destroys, by it's impetnosity, the very elements of tranquillity?

But, to make the question more clear,—

Do the gratifications of the senses captivate us so far, as to offer happiness sufficient to fill the heart?

How short their duration compared with the whole of life! Is it honour or praise, exterior splendour, or independent advantages of fortune that we desire or pursue, to constitute the structure of our happiness?

It is distance only which gives them their

value,—when once reached, the charm which invested them dissolves; besides, man is not sufficient of *himself* to gain these several advantages, and who that knows the world would build his happiness upon that in which he must depend on another to *assist*, at least, in obtaining? We should ourselves be the centre of our own system of happiness, to render it at all probable we shall enjoy it; And unless we possess a moral independence, it is in vain to expect it.

In short, the happiness of men must rest upon something independent of the senses, the imagination, and the aid of others. And what is it that possesses this independence but Religion; the duties and obligations which it prescribes, and the mild restraints by which it moderates our eager pursuit of phantoms, and checks our “brainless ardours?”

Every source of happiness that is not connected with this, will speedily exhaust itself; or, like

the flame of a lamp, will quickly expire, unless carefully refreshed. But those which unite with the pure flame of Religion, are, like the solar light, undeviating, exhaustless, and ever the same.

It has been beautifully and justly observed, that "when a true Christian has discharged his duties, all search after his happiness is over; he makes no inquiry into the nature of the lot that has fallen to him, he knows neither what he has to desire nor what he has to fear, his only certainty regards his duties; his Religion has left nothing vague or unsettled, as to the actions of life. The noblest qualities of the soul—generosity, sensibility, may, in the bustle and struggle of the passions, oppose to each other affections of equal force, but Religion furnishes a code which provides a law to regulate, under *all* circumstances, what actions we have to perform."*

* Stael.

If we look for happiness from the world's opinion, we, in fact, allow others to form the laws on which it is founded ; and this is, indeed, like attempting to repose on the stormy billow, the sport of every wind.

Can happiness exist in the mind, under this state of painful undulation and continued fluctuation ?

But Religion, assuring us of a reward, is satisfied, having her recompences in herself ; and he who cherishes her in purity needs not the suffrage of the world to determine his taste, or to enable him to enjoy what it has to bestow.

“ Religion ! thou the soul of happiness.

“ There shine

“ The noblest truths ; there strongest motives sting ;

“ There sacred violence assaults the soul ;

“ There nothing but compulsion is forborne.—

“ His hand the good man fastens on the skies,

“ And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.”

Young.

Reminiscence is a grand source of happiness to the good and religious; but to those who are the sport of the world's vanity, and rest on the world's hope, the past is a gloomy shadow, which, if not rendered more horrid by the spectre of remorse, presents no image to cheer, but fondly-pictured joys, which eluded the grasp, or deceived in possession. For, in proportion to the ardency of sensation in that which is past, will be found the languor following the tumult of passion. But he whose passions own the control of religious principles, is a stranger to these inward storms, these sad irregular emotions; those principles, continually acting around their own eternal centre, keep the mind firm and steady, induce it to form proper ideas of the nature of happiness, and sustain it by enforcing the undeviating practice of duty.

Doubt, vacillation, and inconsistency mark the conduct of those who rest upon earth for their comforts, and who look not beyond it with hope.

But Religion fixes and supports this “trembling stalk;” for it at once unherringly directs them what to love, to chuse, to perform, and so sweetly simplifies self-government, as to render the task comparatively easy. Nor is it’s influence confined to the interest of a day, the pleasure of a moment, as is found to be the case in the system of *expedience*; for it is invariable, perpetual, comprising the whole of life,—

“Supporter sole of man above himself.”

It is, in fact, the abiding friend, who directs and encourages our steps,—an ever-lively sentiment, which, so far from banishing comfort, leads us to the very fount: from it, for instance, flow true benevolence and forbearance, the kindly social spirit, urbanity of manners, that “amiable expression of a heart which seeks to unite itself with others.” Infidels acknowledge these are sources of pleasure, but they ungratefully forget that they are the brightest ornaments, the constant attendants of the Religion

they deride; and yet they are willing to profit by it's essential qualities, although they refuse to subject themselves to it's rules.

"A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man;

"Some sinister intent taints all he does,

"And in his kindest actions he's unkind."

YOUNG.

But, I think I hear you say, "supposing I admit this, does it not prove, that men may be attached to morality from mere self-interest? for what you advance, is but a modification of it." I allow that abstract virtue may be a good guide in our course of life, but all who have studied their own heart must also allow, that to render it a constant and effectual one, it needs encouragement and a stimulus beyond it's mere exercise,—and in Religion, with it's motives and hopes, it finds this encouragement.

It needs no extensive knowledge or observation to see the beauty of morality, and it's

numberless benefits; but to follow it's dictates with confidence and firmness, knowledge and reflection, to chuse and to compare, is necessary; we therefore require some motive to excite us to the study, and this excitement is found in Religion. The principles of order and happiness, with all their subtile distinctions, may be studied by the learned and curious, but the mass of society require something more definite and simple; they are dazzled and blinded, by brilliant plans;—it is useful, unadorned truths they require, nor can they without imminent danger diverge, in the smallest degree, from those principles to which time and experience have given a sanction, although succeeded by those which may chance to be more wise. Sound morality, built upon rational views of Religion, are surely better calculated to fix the principles than abstruse speculations, which, not being founded on experience, offer no solid basis upon which the mind can rest. Such can be but of little benefit to the head,

and none to the heart; they tend but to puzzle the one and to injure the other, with fallacious sophisms. This leads me to revert to what you call my "favorite theory," that the power of popular opinion can never equal in utility those grand principles of morality which have their basis upon Religion, and are fixed by it in the hearts of men, equally applying to every distinction of birth, station, and circumstances.— In short, it is incredible how any one can deny this superiority, but by supposing that self-love has thrown such a cloud over the mind, and has involved it in such darkness, that it cannot judge rightly; and seeing through this obscure and false medium, they despise Religion because it does not emanate from themselves, and give the preference to those visionary speculations and sophistical arguments which are their own creation, seduced by a phantom of their own high-wrought and ill-regulated imagination.

Had it been necessary to my purpose, my

dear Albert, to have preserved arrangement and order in my observations, the end I propose must be defeated by the desultory manner in which I address you. But *feeling* is a woman's *reasoning*; and according as the subjects have awakened different emotions, or their importance has been estimated by my heart, so have I expressed them. Take this as an apology for the tautology, prolixity, and want of connexion you must observe in what I write. And suffer me, dear Albert, once more to repeat, that to Religion alone we can safely confide public and private happiness. This, this alone, faithful and vigilant, surpasses every other security, and, by the force of a great example and unerring precepts, leads men to the simple knowledge of every thing they ought to feel, to admire, to imitate. It is this alone which preserves the happy and constant harmony of principles and actions, for ever at variance with those who depend upon expediency and propriety;—yes, Religion,

"E'en in this night of frailty, pain, and death,
"Can give the *soul a soul* that acts a God."

YOUNG.

If I have not quite tired you out, my friend,
I will very soon resume my pen; but now relieve you from the *persecuting zeal* of

Your faithful

EUGENIA.

LETTER VI.

EUGENIA to ALBERT.

You say, dear Albert, "I shall find it difficult to overcome the objection against Religion, formed by the fact of it's being an instrument of tyranny and furious enthusiasm." "Has it not," you ask, "deluged the world with blood, and shut from the light of day many millions of innocent beings, who but for it would have ornamented and benefitted society?" All this I grant, but I also believe that Religion has oftener been the pretext than the true motive

of such dreadful crimes, of such cruel oppression; but even were it not so, can your enlightened mind, Albert, condemn a principle because it has suffered abuse? As well might we shut from our sight the light of the sun, because his glowing beams sometimes oppress us: as well (to use the words, or rather the argument of a great politician), "might we prove the advantages of anarchy, by relating the abuses of legitimate authority; decry every species of jurisprudence, by recounting all the evils produced by chicane; throw an odium on the sciences by recording fatal discoveries: as well think it proper to stifle every kind of activity, by reciting the crimes which covetousness, pride, and ambition have given rise to."

"A thousand arguments swarm around my pen."

But it would be an insult further to prove the injustice of the objection; it is impossible it can be thought such, by one whose notions

are just, as your's at least once were. Fanaticism and Religion have no fellowship, although they are frequently united in the minds and imaginations of men.

The worship of a great and merciful God, the mild and forbearing morality of the Gospel, can never inspire the spirit of persecution. No, it's cruel zeal must be attributed to lamentable self-deceit,—a blind fury, resembling all those wild errors and crimes which dishonour humanity, and to which they are led by the power of ill-regulated passion.

But granting that a weak and perverted sense of Religion has too often given birth to hatred and division, is it's pure spirit (and it is such only I would speak of), is it's pure spirit to be received with less gratitude, because of the abuses which spring from an erroneous interpretation of it's precepts, or a perversion of it's doctrines?

Surely common justice would put the negative upon such a conclusion. Intolerant zeal is not, however, the vice of the age; it is an error upon which the progress of our knowledge has had a powerful influence. This, therefore, of all the arguments of the Infidel, appears the most absurd and frivolous.

But in replying to your objections, I have, as usual, been led away from my direct subject:—the influence of Religion upon the happiness of the individual.

I resume,—And surely the faculties with which we are endowed, the consciousness of possessing them, and the liberty of action granted us, are sufficient evidences to intelligent beings, that they are formed to derive their happiness from the thought that they emanate from some great cause, are a part of some grand combination, and continually tend to a superior state of being!

Simple instinct would have enabled us to preserve a perishable frame, but mind seems to connect us with a superior order of beings, and to make us a part of a grand whole. The gifts of nature appear to lead us to Religion, as the means to attain some grand end, by exercising, as it does, the noblest faculties and the sweetest affections.

For, in the midst of all this conscious dignity, we feel our weakness; surrounded as we are by magnificent evidences of power, we feel what atoms we are, and almost instinctively feel the necessity of a strength beyond any thing derived from earth to support us; a rational sentiment seems to urge us to implore this support from that Power whose operations are so visible, and from "nature we ascend to nature's God."

Thus far nature herself seems to guide us, and to elevate our wishes to the Supreme; but

here she leaves us;—she gives us no certain assurances, that those wishes affect the great God of the universe. We see, indeed, every where around us inexhaustible proofs of benevolence, order, and goodness, and we believe, by imitating these perfections, we may please and propitiate the great exemplar of them, and concur, however feebly, in his great designs; and what is yet more grateful to the heart, open a communication with Him, by the homage of gratitude and adoration. Thus does the mind become habitually conversant with the most exalted subjects, and happiness must be the result; as we are raised above the petty disturbances of earthly objects, and earthly vicissitudes.

If such are the benefits of the Religion of nature, how infinitely augmented is every motive, how infinitely increased every blessing, when we acknowledge the Religion of Revelation!—discovering to man the true nature of

his condition, the reason of his situation in the world, and the ultimate end of his being; which at once clears up the perplexities of doubt, and banishes our fears; of which, every precept, in it's natural and ordinary operation, tends to the increase of human happiness. Is there any scheme of morality which can offer what that does? Let any one who doubts it, trace out to our view the ever-varying shades of philosophic infidelity,—from him who rejects his Saviour to him who rejects his God, and point out solid ground whereon we can rest, where we can find quiet and tranquillity (remembering that apathy and obduracy must not be mistaken for them); any to give confidence and animation to the human mind,—any to place us beyond the tumult of human passions? No: the Infidel knows there is not; but there is a principle in their system that delights in laying waste in the bosom of others that happiness they have rejected from their own; hence the

ardour of Infidels in disseminating their doctrines.

“ But these, thou think’st, are gloomy ways to joy.”

“ It is in vain (I think you say) you wish us to attend to those considerations, while we have so many reasons to doubt the benevolence of the Being upon whom you bid us rely. Do we not see vice every where triumphant, while honesty and virtue are languishing in obscurity and despondency; and how is this to be reconciled with the idea of a Divine Providence, or likely to call forth gratitude.”

The basis of this reproach must first be established ere we endeavour to meet it, and in the examination we must not deduce our inference from external triumph or abasement, from splendour and obscurity; all these are sometimes very, very foreign to the internal sentiment,—to which alone we must look, to form our estimate of happiness and misery. But I

venture to assert, without fear of contradiction, that, taking not isolated incidents, but the whole of life, we shall find that the most constant satisfaction, and the purest happiness, attend those minds which are fraught with a mild and gentle piety,—firm, rational, and pure; such as a God of compassion, goodness, wisdom, and purity may be supposed to inspire. We need but to examine the lives and sentiments of men *of the world* and the men *not of the world*, as they have been exhibited to us by themselves, or those who intimately knew them.

First observing, that if our sum of happiness were to be calculated by our merit or demerit here below, our life would be reduced to such a selfish calculation, that it would lose all interest, and hope itself must expire. I need not go far in the present circle of your friends, my dear Albert, to find my model for a man of the world. I correct myself, I would say amongst those who profess a friendship for you; for

(call me not severe), the bosom of an Infidel is not the soil for the genuine plant,—it is far, far too cold and cheerless!

Now candidly tell me, have you found in these your companions (I avoid appeal to your own heart), have you found in them, indications of superior internal happiness? Whence that alternate gloom and violent elation, that restlessness and hurry of spirit, those unequal manners and caprices of temper, of which I have often heard you complain, even while you were extolling the commanding force of their genius, their attic wit, and their profound learning. Perhaps you may reply, “from constitution and a temperament peculiar to genius.”

It may in part arise from these causes, but I diffidently think it may more justly be attributed to an indistinct spectre, which continually haunts, of death and a future judgment, the reality of which they have not the courage to

examine, yet from it have no power to remove their eyes. If they endeavour to retire from it into themselves, what is the scene that there awaits them?—nothing but disgust and aversion. In spite of all their efforts to avoid the conviction, they are compelled to acknowledge that their lives have been passed solely in the gratification of selfish passions, for the sake of which all sacred ties have been dissolved. Instead of bringing their portion of good-will, and adding to social love and joy, they have destroyed the happiness of all around them, by unjust, unsocial, and criminal passions.

•

Base and faithless deserters from the end of their being, by wicked deception they spread rain and misery around them. Can joy dwell in hearts like these? Reflections will arise to shew them to themselves, when their hearts will pronounce they have been fools as well as villains; and to conceal from others what they so plainly see, becomes the object of their constant

vigilance. They dwell among men, contributing nothing to their felicity, and unable to partake of it, from the tumult of bad passions, which continually agitate their souls. Can happiness be the portion of those who feel they deserve not a friend on earth, and can have none in heaven?

————— “What terrestrial woe can match

“The self-convicted bosom, which hath wrought

“The bane of others, or enslaved itself

“With shackles vile?” ———

When the soul loathes itself.

It is not requisite such men should be punished by man, to make them utterly miserable; their own hearts take ample vengeance for the laws they have violated; external ills are light to what they feel. Such men will indeed sometimes succeed in deceiving the world into an idea of their being happy, by a well-acted hypocrisy, by their brilliant fancy, and their levity

of manner; but all this is false and hollow.

Deep concealed are all

"The innate tortures of that fell* despair,
"Which is remorse, without the fear of hell;
"But, all in all sufficient of itself,
"Would make a hell in heav'n."

Oh! what shall exorcise

"From out th' unbounded spirit the quick sense
"Of it's own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and reward,
"Upon itself? There is no future pang
"Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd
"He deals on his own heart."

(*Byron's Manfred.*)

"Slight are the outward signs of evil thought;
"Within, within, 'twas there the spirit wrought."

(*Corsair.*)

How different is the condition of the men
not of the world, need scarcely be said, for their
happiness is independent of it's mere externals;
their pleasures are all heartfelt, internal. Their
minds are prepared for every situation, because
they know all are fixed by a merciful and wise

* Deep, in the original.

Being, and although they may be subjected to transitory evil, it probably may be a part of that universal harmony which pervades the moral world, however imperceptible to our finite understanding. The world not bestowing their enjoyments, they are little affected by it's changes; but with hearts of the softest sympathetic feeling, and minds open to every innocent enjoyment, they can firmly meet every vicissitude. If the world frown, they know they have a sure refuge to flee to: are it's favours bestowed, they know and acknowledge it's source, and gratitude to the original Dispenser breathes in good-will to his favored instruments. Every thing animate and inanimate awakens in them the liveliest emotions of happiness, as connected by a thousand nameless ties with the God they adore and trust. Every thing within them and around them, keeps alive this pleasing emotion of grateful love. The contemplation of themselves excites a sentiment of joyful admiration, worthy of Him they adore.

They contemplate the aspiring powers of their mind, and rejoice in the faculty of exploring all the charms of existence; and, conscious of their immortal destination, expatiate with delight upon views which it opens of continual improvement. Considering life but as the vestibule, they diligently study the elements of that knowledge they are to perfect in that other, to which it leads, and to which they look with lively hope. Sensibility, and all its train of pure emotions, they unweariedly exercise in promoting the felicity and good of others, and find it "thrice blessed." Searching for a proportion between the boundless range of their wishes and the meditations of their souls, with the narrow views of the present existence, and finding none, their faith in another of extended intelligence is strengthened and confirmed; and in the contemplation of this grand truth, in adoring Him who has revealed it, who has surrounded them with every thing than can encourage expectation, and who has allowed them thus to approach to so near

a knowledge of his perfections, they find their well-spring of happiness.

Yes, believe me, my beloved but misguided friend, equally happy and honorable are those who unite Religion with morality, and who daily increase the purity of both by perfecting their faith in a God and Redeemer. Compared with the happiness such individuals enjoy, every other sinks into nothing; and this, this alone is worthy,—this alone can fill the soul of an immortal and accountable being.

————— “Philosophy, baptiz’d

“In the pure fountain of eternal love,

“Has eyes indeed; and viewing all she sees

“As meant to indicate a God to man,

“Gives Him the praise, and forfeits not her own.”

————— “Nature, throwing wide

“Her veil opaque, discloses with a smile

“The Author of her beauties, who, retir’d

“Behind his own creation, works unseen

“By the impure; and hears his pow’r deny’d.

“Thou art the source and centre of all minds,

“Their only point of rest, eternal Word!

" From Thee departing, they are lost, and rove

" At random,—without honour, hope, or peace.

" From Thee, is all that soothes the life of man,

" His high endeavour, and his glad success ;

" His strength to suffer, and his will to serve."

COWPER.

I believe, were it possible to ascertain it clearly, it would be acknowledged, that, in drawing this contrast, I have not sketched an exaggerated picture,—and of this your more extended experience will enable you to judge, if you determine to divest yourself of partiality ; and, imperfect as my attempt may be, I yet trust it is sufficiently strong and authentic to confute the objection against the moral government of the Deity, although I cannot see that a belief in his existence must be withheld, because we do not know precisely in what manner and at what period he will punish or reward the creatures of his will.

Should we not rather wait in humility and

obedience for that moment, when he shall deign to make us fully acquainted with his attributes? Instead of making the mysteries of his providence an occasion of doubt, should we not rather believe that the apparent disorders of the moral world, compared with the harmony we observe in the material, announces a period of equilibrium and perfection,—a time when every creature shall know his connection with the harmony of the whole, and the wisdom of the Creator will be fully proved in the operations of his providence, as it now is in the vestiges of his power? But we are at present too far removed from the High and Lofty One, to pretend, without being guilty of presumption, to measure his works by our bounded capacity, by our imperfect scale. Let us recollect the distance which separates man from his Creator, and let us humbly adore and obediently serve, but never presume to fathom the depth of his ways, or question the wisdom and mercy of his government. What! the child of dust contend

with the source of life! the fleeting shadow of a moment, presume to reach to the heights of eternity! an almost imperceptible atom, question the attributes of the Infinite! Amazing pride, most lamentable presumption! Deity brought to the bar of his creatures; there to wait the decision of their judgment, ere he is believed or revered! But, you say, "How can we be expected to reverence, or believe in a Being, we cannot comprehend, and whom we do not perceive saves us from the evils in which, if he controls the world, he has placed us; we do not perceive he interferes with, or directs us."

Are we, then, to doubt his assistance, because his ways are above the flight of our minds?—"Weigh me the weight of the fire, or measure me the blast of the wind, or call me again the day that is past;" then will I admit your right to question, then will I admit the cruelty which has drawn a veil before the essence of the God-

head. Would it not, however, be more honorable to the Deity, more consistent with our limited views, to humbly acknowledge that our understanding is yet too weak to discover the secret it searches for?

It has been justly observed, "there is a point where reason ceases to be reason," and it surely applies where the mind dwells upon the mysteries of Religion and Providence, as a reason to doubt the one and condemn the other. But is it in Religion and Providence only, that we find mysteries? Need you go farther than your own frame, to find them multiplied? but do you doubt your own identity, because your very nature is a mystery?

Explain to me, what is the mysterious authority of your will over your actions? Explain to me, what it is that sends the thought to the remotest period of time, that places the imagination in the most distant quarters of the globe,

that bids it range from earth to heaven? Tell me how the soul assembles and investigates the host of recollections and anticipations, sometimes crowding in with overwhelming impetuosity, sometimes deaf to our most urgent summons? Explain to me these operations of your own nature, then will I admit you may question the Deity, because your mind cannot grasp his immensity. But should we not rather gratefully acknowledge, that our existence is united with so many wonders; and bow with reverential awe before that powerful Being, who has bestowed so many blessings; and mark with astonished delight the perfection which our spiritual faculties may acquire by their simple and humble, but constant exercise. Albert,

“ I know thee proud,
“ For once let pride befriend thee;
“ Art thou ambitious? why then make the worm
“ Thine equal?”
“ When I behold a genius bright, and base
“ Of towering talents and terrestrial aims;
“ Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,

“ The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,

“ With rubbish mix’d, and glittering in the dust.”

YOUNG.

Oh, doubt no longer, my friend ! unless you can give more substantial reasons why you should not believe, than that you cannot fathom the secrets of nature, the mysteries of Providence, or your own capacities. Imagine you hear the Eternal Source of all, thus addressing you :—

“ Go to admire a portion of my universe, to search for happiness, and to learn to love me ; but do not try to raise the veil with which I have covered the secret of thy existence. I have composed thy nature of some of the attributes which constitute my own essence : thou would’st be too near me, if I should permit thee to penetrate the mysteries of it ; wait for the moment destined by my wisdom ; till then, thou canst only reach me by reverence

and gratitude.”* The grand truths necessary and sufficient to regulate our conduct, and comfort our hearts, are easily perceived, and so plain they cannot be mistaken. It has been expressively remarked, that “God is like the sun, at which we cannot steadfastly gaze without injury to our vision; but throwing down our eyes, we perceive it’s rays, and the beauties it spreads around.” I close this letter now, and offer to your perusal some lines from the pen of a friend, which, as treating on the same subject as a part of it, perhaps you may not find quite uninteresting.

I remain, with anxious wishes for your true happiness, dear Albert,

Your faithful

EUGENIA.

* Eugenia has quoted this address from a metaphysical writer; but it must be acknowledged, it has none of the mischievous perplexities of the study, but is a good comment on “Thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.”

STANZAS.

"I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

Fond Atheist! could a giddy dance
Of atoms, lawless hurl'd,
Produce so regular, so fair,
So harmoniz'd a world?

Why not Arabia's driving sands,
The sport of ev'ry storm,
A palace here, the child of chance,—
Or there, a temple form?

Presumptuous wretch! thyself survey,
Thy lesser fabric scan;
Tell me from whence th' immortal dust,
The God,—the reptile, Man?

Where wert thou, when the embryo earth
From chaos burst it's way?
When stars, exulting, sung the morn,
And hail'd the new-born day?

Or tell me whence the seedy speck,
The miniature of man,
Nurs'd in the womb, and fill'd with life,
It's primal course began ?

What fingers brace the tender nerves,
The twisting fibres spin ;
Who clothes in flesh the hard'ning bone,
Or weaves the silken skin ?

Why chanc'd the head and tender heart,
Life's more immediate throne,—
Where fatal ev'ry touch, to be
Immail'd in solid bone ?

Where learnt the liver to digest
The silver floods of chyle,
And in it's proper vase confine
The saffron-colour'd bile ?

Who taught the wand'ring tides of blood
To leave the vital urn,—

Visit each limb in purple streams,
And faithfully return ?

How know the lungs to heave and pant ;
Or how the fringed lid
To guard the fearful eye, and brush
The sully'd orb unbid ?

How came the nerves to know the will
The hinged limbs to wield,—
The tongue ten thousand tastes discern,
Ten thousand accents build ?

How delicate the mazy ear,
To image every sound !
The eye to catch the pleasing view,
Or feast on scenes around !

Who taught the sympathetic mind
Another's woe to prove,—
Or gave the heart of man to feel
Each fond entrance of love ?

Avaunt conceit! and learn to know
The time's approaching near,
When each must answer for himself,
While list'ning angels hear.



NOTE.—The Editor believes these lines may have appeared in print before, but hopes apology is unnecessary for their insertion in a letter upon a similar subject.

LETTER VII.

EUGENIA to ALBERT.

YOUR objections are so multiplied, my dear Albert, that were it not for the appearance of defeat, which I am far from allowing, I should no further contend the point, upon which you appear as inflexible as your "little casuist." To pursue the subject, therefore:—You say, that "hope, upon which I dwell with such constant repetition, is not, cannot be, of sufficient power to determine men to the observance of morality, and to subject them to the sacrifices imposed by virtue." But I would ask, why in this single instance, does the hope of happiness cease to be a stimulus?

What is it that attracts men, in all the busy plans of life, but hope? what makes them so greedy of it's honours, it's wealth, and advantages, but expectation? Why then is actual demonstration required to assure you on this single point, to induce you moderately to use things temporal, that you may not forfeit things eternal? But if you do require demonstration, you will find it in the Revelation of the Gospel; why then refuse to examine it, to acknowledge it, and to act upon it? — It is but too well known, that the majority of those who deny it's truth, have never perused it as a *whole*, but have rested their doubts, and drawn their arguments, upon a few obscure and isolated passages. But suffer me, my friend, to assure you

“ Who most examine, most believe :

"Read the whole volume, Sceptic, then reply."

Let me entreat you then to examine the truths of Christianity, with a calm dispassionate mind ;

and if thus examined, divested of prejudice or preconceived opinions, I dare assure myself and you, that you will find them irresistible. A mind of such discernment as your's, Albert, cannot fail to discover the accordancy of it's statements, with every fluctuation of feeling in your own bosom. There the Deity is represented in such magnificence, power, compassion, and long-suffering, that you cannot but acknowledge his right of supremacy, and be led to a willing obedience of his laws. Arguments might be multiplied upon this most important of all subjects; but there are too many able and clear expositions of the evidences of revealed truth, to render it necessary for me to add my feeble suffrage in it's favour.

“ But, be it false,

“ What truth on earth so precious as the lie ? ”

For there we find precepts which give to life civility, happiness, and purity; and to death peace, fortitude, and hope. “ If we err, we err

with those who have drank deep of the fountain of human knowledge, and who *dissolved not the pearl of their salvation in the draught*. We err with Bacon, the great confidant of nature, fraught with all the learning of the past, and almost prescient of the future, yet too wise not to know his weakness, and too philosophic not to feel his ignorance. We err with Milton, rising on an angel's wing to heaven, and, like the bird of morn, soaring out of sight amid the music of his grateful piety. We err with Locke, whose pure philosophy only taught him to adore it's source, whose warm love of genuine liberty was never chilled into rebellion with it's Author. We err with Newton, whose star-like spirit, shooting athwart the darkness of the sphere, too soon to re-ascend the place of his nativity."* With men like these, my Albert, and innumerable others of the same elevated genius and ardent piety, let us, like the individual whose animated words I have used,

* Phillips,

determine to err, until something more worthy our belief and homage than the Christian Religion is offered to us.

But, Albert, if there is not a God, if there is no future world,—think, for a moment think, what are the heavy clouds, what the overwhelming darkness, which must cover the feelings, that seem to outstrip our reason, when endeavouring to explore futurity! For a moment think of the profound, the melancholy, the eternal silence, which would surround all nature, that would follow this gay and beautiful world! With bosoms panting with hope, and none to cling to! with hearts shrinking from death and annihilation, but seeing them advance with rapid strides, and unable to elude them!

Does Atheism, then, as it boasts, free us from the terror of fatuity? Surely not. Can such a system produce happiness? Oh no! because it is repugnant to every emotion of nature.—

On the contrary, as has been justly observed, "A God, such as my heart delineates, encourages and moderates my feelings; I say to myself, he is good and indulgent. He knows my weakness, he loves to produce happiness, and I see the advances of death without terror. But to live under the dominion of an insensible nature, may make every fear reasonable. In vain I demand what is to become of me? it is deaf to my voice. Devoid of will, of thought, or feeling, it is governed by an irresistible force, whose motion is a mystery never to be unfolded."*

Can a feeling and elevated soul, enjoying a sentiment of it's own grandeur, bear to think upon such an end,—bear to anticipate such a destruction of all it's faculties? Surely such thoughts would blight the noblest actions, and be a continual source of despondency. Save us, merciful God, from such a fatal delusion!

* Neckar.

guard our minds from such horrid phantoms, from all those errors of reason and dangerous sophistries, which draw a barrier between man and his Creator! Oh! Albert, had you, like me, watched the slow but steady steps of death advance towards those who were most dear, had you beheld his approach in the moments of solitude; had you known every earthly tie (save one) dissolved, and life presenting a dreary waste, the visions of human hope dispelled,—you surely would, like me, seek to refresh your exhausted spirit, from the source of hope which Religion mercifully presents; rather than dash from your own lips the draught she offers, and rashly deprive your fellow-creatures of the same cordial of hope,—or, with horrid mockery, offer in it's stead the bitter chalice of doubt, uncertainty, and despair!

“What an old tale is this!” my Albert cries.—

“I grant the argument is old,—but truth

“No years impair; and had not this been true,

“Thou never hadst despis'd it for it's age.

" Truth is immortal as thy soul ; and fable
" As fleeting as thy joys. Be wise, nor make
" Heav'n's highest blessing vengeance ; O be wise !
" Nor make a curse of immortality."

Young.

Adieu ! That conviction may pierce the heart
of Albert, is the unceasing prayer of his

Faithful

EUGENIA.

P.S. This letter is but a short one, but the
messenger waits, and obliges me to close it
long ere I wished.

LETTER VIII.

EUGENIA to ALBERT.

FAR from me, my dear Albert, is the wish or the intention that you should rest upon my feeble judgment, in subjects of conscience; never, never did I for a moment desire to bias your reason or opinions upon a point of such vital importance as Religion, and the particular modification of it you might chuse. No: I only require a faithful examination before it is questioned, and not to have unavoidable mysteries made the pretext of condemnation and doubt.

“ Read and revere the sacred page; a page

“ Where triumphs immortality, a page

“ Which not the whole creation could produce,

“ Which not the conflagration shall destroy.”—

" There truths abound, of sov'reign aid to peace ;

" Ah ! do not prize them less, because inspir'd :

" As thou and thine are apt and proud to do.

" If not inspir'd, that pregnant page had stood

" Time's treasure ! and the wonder of the wise ! "

YOUNG.

Exert the whole powers of your reason upon this examination,—trace the fountain of our Religion to the very head ; it will bear the search, and will be found pure and refreshing. But, to speak without a metaphor, our Religion is truly a rational one ; and it cannot be displeasing to Him who endowed us with the faculty, that we exercise it : but reason has it's proper limits, which passed—degenerates into wild hypothesis, and daring conjecture. If our reason, humbly exercised, leads us to doubt the proofs of Religion, it at least should preserve us from regarding them with contempt ; it at least should respect the opinions of others, so far as to prevent all endeavours to blind them with the veil which obscures our own

view. It at least should guard us against withdrawing that support from others, upon which we cannot rest our own hope.

Every individual is allowed, by the mild laws of our country, the free exercise of his Religion, whatever it's form; every man is permitted to judge for himself on religious subjects: but all law would become a dead letter, were every one allowed to disseminate his doctrines, and thus to subvert with impunity the Religion of the state.—

“ To smile at piety, yet boast aloud

“ Good-will to men.”—

If, therefore, in your examination of Christianity, you cannot see how unequivocally it points out our beginning, our condition, and our destination,—if you cannot see there displayed a sovereign, unbounded goodness, an inexhaustible compassion, oh endeavour not to remove this sustaining faith from others, who

have found in the divine system of intercession and redemption an anchor, keeping them sure and steadfast in the storms of life! Seek not, oh! seek not, in the pride of your own delusion, to spread derision over the most elevating sentiments, nor, with the poisoned shafts of ridicule, to wound those hearts you possess no balm to cure.

Oh, my friend! when I think (and, alas! when do I cease to think?) of the perversion of that moral sense I once thought so just, so pure; when I think of the torpidity of that sense which was once so lively in you, of what is due to the Creator, my heart sinks in despondency, and my mental eye sees realized that affecting picture of a man, whose range of intellect can reach with commanding survey over the broad fields of human speculation, who can meet with fearless confidence every intricacy of human argument, who can, step by step, scale the sublimities of science and seem to subordinate all

nature, and yet is utterly blind to his own true dignity, and in a state of lamentable apathy concerning the great prerogative of his nature ! Can your enlarged mind be satisfied with chaining itself to sublunary things ? Can it not find worthier objects upon which to exercise it's powers, than questioning opinions and principles essential to our happiness ? and if candour obliges you to censure, yet to respect what you perceive generally useful, nor seek artfully to destroy or relax the bonds which unite men to their God and Judge ?

I agree with you, that severity and superstition are to be dreaded, and avoided ; but a culpable indifference is equally to be dreaded, as the fruitful parent of unnumbered misfortunes, which Religion can alone save us from ; for it is so far from being a violent and rigorous principle, that it is the foundation of every social virtue, of every mild and indulgent sentiment : such a Religion, moderate and rational, let me

once more repeat, can alone guide us to the path of happiness and virtue, by addressing equally our hearts and minds. In the spirit of charity and forbearance, which the Gospel I recommend to your serious study breathes through every page, I have written; oh, that a persuasive unction might attend my words! that you may see and rest upon those principles, whose base is fixed beyond the narrow circle of terrestrial interests! Open all your faculties to the splendid light which surrounds you; let your heart and your mind welcome it, and seek your true pleasure in diffusing it.——

A sudden faintness overpowers me;—I must lay aside my pen for awhile.——I am a little recovered; but my head is strangely confused, I find I cannot continue.——

Albert, if I should die (call me not fanciful),—if I should die, forgive me whatever has appeared harsh in my correspondence, in consi-

deration of the motive which has prompted me. Heaven is my witness, it has been to insure your happiness! Oh, assure yourself, that a prayer, that it may be so, will be wafted to the eternal fount of mercy, with the last sigh of your

Fond and faithful

EUGENIA.

The last lines of this letter were nearly illegible, from being evidently written with a trembling and agitated hand, as well as from the traces of many tears.

CONCLUDING LETTER.



*From * * * * to ALBERT.*

WERE it possible any thing could add to my present grief, it would be augmented by the necessity. I have, my once dear young friend, of apprising you, that the visions of earthly happiness, which from boyhood you have contemplated; are for ever dispelled,—alas! but too surely dispelled, by your own rash folly and dereliction of early-cherished principle!

Our Eugenia is now an angel of light! does not this fact pierce, like the lightning's flash, to the very recesses of your soul! It is on this assurance, *I* am enabled to fix my view,—from

this I derive *my* consolation. Ah! if *you* could do so, she might not have died! but I write not to reproach. You loved her! and well I know, though age has moderated feelings which in youth were at once my bliss and bane,—well I know the bereaved heart cannot rest satisfied with the mere announcement of a loss in which all others is comprised;—that it seeks, nay demands the minutest detail of the circumstances connected with it: and I now, with a trembling hand and agonized heart, hasten to fulfil this act of friendship and of duty,—both to satisfy your feelings, and also with the hope that the detail may tend to effect that change of sentiment, upon which the departed angel, of whom I shall speak, rested her earthly happiness:—and suffer me here to remind you,

“ They mourn the dead, who live as they desire.”

From the period of your departure for E——, dejection, far beyond her usual placid pensiveness, seemed to weigh upon the spirits of my

beloved niece; but she so carefully shunned every affectionate endeavour I ventured to make to ascertain it's cause, that delicacy forbade my urging it, and I was induced at length to believe that it was but the natural effect of a separation from you, combined with those reflections which would fill a mind so pure and artless as her's, upon the anticipated change of condition your return would accomplish, in becoming the wife of him to whom she had so long given her affections; and I was confirmed in this idea, by many little incidents daily occurring, particularly her evident effort to assume a cheerfulness in my society, I believed to avoid my innocent raillery,—although that her mind was perturbed, was still visible to my scrutinizing affection, confirmed also by frequently hearing her at night pacing her apartment with agitated step, a circumstance delicacy and propriety equally prevented my naming to her; Thus time passed on in alternations of anxiety and hope on my part, the latter predominating as

the period of your return grew nearer; as I then anticipated all would be happiness.

“ How richly were my noontide trances hung

“ With gorgeous tapestries of pictur’d joys!

“ Joy behind joy, in endless perspective !”

YOUNG.

About a fortnight since, business called me to London. I thought Eugenia seemed rather pleased at the occurrence; she said, with more vivacity than she had evinced for some time, “ Do not hurry yourself back, my dear Uncle, for I have a great deal of business to employ me during your absence.” “ Very well,” I replied, “ but I charge you not to prepare your wedding dress, for *I* mean to provide that, if you will trust to my taste.” Never shall I forget her mournful but heavenly smile, as she took my hand, and kissed it; but she spoke not! On the day of my return, I did not reach home till late in the evening, and I entered the sitting-room without being announced. The

dear girl uttered an exclamation of pleasure and surprise on hearing my voice, but the light was too obscure for me to observe her countenance. When, however, with a parent's warmth, I pressed her cheek with my lips, it felt like a living coal to the touch; I took her hand,—it's burning palm alarmed me. "You are not well, Eugenia," I observed, anxiously: "Yes, dear uncle, I have but a slight cold, it will soon be well, now I have my dear indulgent nurse." I ordered lights, and it was then I saw full evidences of the fever which was consuming my angelic companion. Her eyes, sometimes without lustre and half-concealed by the heavy-closing lid, sometimes emitting a brilliancy almost too vivid to look at, and wandering, with agitated eagerness, to every object. Unwilling to notice what occasioned me such serious alarm, and finding she was not disposed to leave me before the usual hour of retiring, I pleaded fatigue, from my journey, and left her,—entreating her instantly to seek repose;

and mentally resolving I would have medical advice for her in the morning. At an early hour I summoned her attendant, who confirmed my fears, by informing me, she had passed a sleepless night, and was, she thought, very ill; this was further confirmed by the opinion of Dr. B. who unequivocally told me, she was in imminent danger, expressing his fear that the ardent fever with which his interesting patient was attacked, arose from mental causes. To describe the anxiety of the following two days is impossible; during that period, the dear sufferer had but few and short intervals of reason. On the third day she was perfectly collected, and apparently so much revived, that hope beamed upon the countenances of all.

She had expressed a wish to be removed from her bed to a sofa by the fire, and as Dr. B. did not object, her request was complied with. She had many times during her delirium impatiently inquired for letters, and she renewed her in-

quity on this day. She was half reclining upon the sofa, supported by the cushions and my arm round her waist, when a servant unguardedly entered with a letter,—the long-desired letter. I felt her tremble. She eagerly put out her hand for it; as eagerly, though with difficulty, broke the seal, and seemed fixed in profound attention as she perused it. In a few moments it fell from her hands; she clasped them convulsively together, while she raised her beautiful eyes, swimming in tears, to heaven. “Alas! it is too late!” she exclaimed, in an accent of agony; but in a moment, seeming to recollect herself, she added “ungrateful that I am! my God, I thank thee; O! how fervently thank thee! we *shall, then*, meet in heaven!—Let it,—oh! let it be thy pleasure to perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle him!” These words left me no doubt but that some cause of grief, connected with your attachment, was relieved or removed by your letter, and its importance was proved by the effect of the sudden revul-

sion of feeling she had experienced in the perusal.

She heaved a convulsive sob, and fainted; continued fits succeeded, and seemed rapidly to relax the springs of life. Upon reviving from the last she had, she seemed to collect all her powers for one effort; she threw herself feebly upon my bosom as I supported her, and said in a low but firm voice, while her frame shook with agitation, "I feel, my beloved uncle, my second father, that *this* is no time for reserves." She pointed timidly to the letter, and continued,—"*He* doubted, *he* denied his God!" she pressed her hand on her forehead, "and could Eugenia be other than miserable?" She looked wildly in my face as she uttered the last words,—"*but, but,*" she continued, "*he* says, '*he almost believes now;*' you, my dear uncle, will be God's instrument to perfect that blessed change, which, perhaps, I have been permitted to begin: we shall have our reward

in the eternal world!" As she concluded these words, she raised my hand (which she had continued to grasp while she spoke) to her lips; I felt them quiver as she pressed them upon it, while her beautiful eyes, beaming with heavenly tenderness, remained fixed on my countenance. Suddenly the pressure became more feeble, her eyes softly fell, and a murmured "Tell him, tell him," was interrupted by a gentle sigh, that wafted her pure spirit to the bosom of her God! The breath of that sigh, I yet feel on my aged cheek, unwetted by a relieving tear. Oh! Albert, were it not for those principles, which were so sweetly exemplified in the angel I have lost, I could curse thee, for the ruin thou hast caused!

The blight of my blooming flower, is but one example among thousands of the desolating power of these pestiferous principles; which lay waste, in their baneful course, every fair form of happiness! From the letter pointed out to

me, and by the dying accents of my Eugenia, I learnt that you have been drawn into the vortex of Infidelity.

Alas! her we mourn was in herself a confutation of your doctrine. You knew the *mind* which animated the form of heaven's gentlest angel,—

“ And are those pow'rs to perish, immature?

“ No: after feeble effort here, beneath

“ A brighter sun, and in a nobler soil,

“ Transplanted from this sublunary bed,

“ They flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom.”

The passage which called forth the gratitude of a pure heart, I found wetted with a tear. It was immediately following that, in which you account for your unusual silence:—“ Eugenia, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian; I say not this in levity, but very seriousness; but I reserve what I have further to say upon the subject for *auricular confession*: I shall be

with you in a fortnight. It is meet that the angel who has pointed out to me the path of peace, should see that I pursue it steadily and firmly."—These words gave a parting gleam of joy to her you must now seek above; may her loss impress upon your soul the value of that hope you have hitherto rejected.

Your love for my only earthly joy, your respect for the brother of your early friend, may urge you to come to me; but think me not unkind if I interdict you,—think me not cruel, when I say, too many painful associations would be awakened by your presence. It would but increase the tension of my feelings, or relax them so suddenly, that the consequences might be fatal to a life, which may yet be *useful*, though it never can be happy.

I shall quit a spot, only endeared to me by the presence of her who enlivened it, in a few days, immediately to proceed to the West

to whom they looked for counsel, instruction, consolation, and affection,—as to a brother, a father, and a friend.

Charles Raymond had been the pupil of Mr. Albury, and had married the ~~orphan~~ niece of his revered tutor. Mary Albury was entirely worthy of the respect and admiration of a man so estimable,—of an attachment which was not a transient fancy, but founded on the firm basis of esteem for the mental, as well as admiration of personal graces.

The pledges of this auspicious union were a daughter and three sons. Nature never formed a more lovely and gentle being than Emily Raymond; at this period of our narrative, in her fifteenth year. The boys possessed that peculiar manliness, and frankness of character and manners, which is the result of finding in a father the combined qualities of a preceptor, a companion, a friend, and promoter of their innocent sports.

This amiable pair equally presided over the education of their children, and took a lively interest in

every circumstance which might contribute to their welfare. Thus identified in their pursuits, their pleasures, and their duties, this could not but be a family of love and happiness, as far as the holiest and noblest exercise of the hearts' feelings, and the minds' energies, can constitute it.

"Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,

"With boundless confidence; for nought but love

"Can answer love, and render bliss secure."

THOMSON."

Raymond had for several years exercised his sacred office, as curate, in the north of England; but on the death of Mr. Albury, he solicited and obtained from the venerable bishop of Durham, the living of A———. It was his delight to follow up the plans, and to imitate the enlightened benevolence, of his revered predecessor. The catastrophe of "the unknown" was well known to him; and the spot where his ashes reposed was a peculiar object of Raymond's attention: it was consequently in the same simple state of invariable neatness, as at the moment of formation; while its sacred character was perhaps rendered more im-

pressive by the soft tintings of time, and the richer foliage of the trees that overshadowed the tomb.

It was autumn ! that sweet "eventide of the year," so soothing, so calm, so gentle : when the mind of reflection turns in upon it's own fluctuations, and meditates upon by-past days : when the passions, the hopes, and the fears of the soul seem to pause,—and the past, the present, and the future seem concentrated to a point : when the parent regards with more intense interest the human blossoms, unfolding beneath his fostering care, and anticipates for them the fading season, which he now contemplates in nature and himself. He remembers the freshness of his own spring, the glory of his own summer ; feels the soft melancholy of his autumn, and looks forward without dismay to the chill of his winter, to be cheered he fondly hopes by the green honours of the branches of the parent stem. There is no harshness, no severity, no sadness, but that which bettera the heart in these reflections. Raymond and his Mary, as they wandered amid the decaying scenes of nature and listened to the winds of autumn, felt their hearts softened indeed, but elevated and invigorated to imitate,

by good-will to others, that benevolence, the traces of which surrounded them on every side. They would point out to their children the volume of nature, they would bid them study it's sweet morality, and they delighted to impress upon their minds the transcending mercy of that Being who had formed them, to find happiness in the contemplation of his perfections, and to teach them that "the heart of man is not thus finely touched, but to fine issues."*

Emily was the animating spirit of the youthful group, and to contribute to her pleasure seemed to constitute that of her brothers. Her birth-day approached, and a favorite domestic, who had married a substantial farmer in the village, petitioned that the auspicious day should be celebrated at the farm, situated about a mile from the rectory, and very near the coast.

The boys, delighted with the prospect of this gala-day, sought the aid of their father, to render the preparations worthy of the occasion; and a little

* Alison.

yacht was ornamented for her reception, on her arrival at the farm, where they were to have refreshments, and afterwards to pass some hours on the water.

It generally occurs that such parties are found more delightful in anticipation, than in reality ; but this day of innocent amusement seemed to afford universal satisfaction, for ample subjects of interest, as well as enjoyment, were found on the shore, the cliffs, and the view of that mighty element, which presents so much to awaken the holiest and sublimest emotions of our nature, even while the powers of the mind are yet but partially unfolded.

The air during the day had that softness and freshness which seems to invigorate the mental capacities, while it excites to cheerfulness and joy. Towards evening, however, it became close and oppressive, yet the vault of heaven was unclouded, and the sea was but slightly agitated. As the sun declined, a thin haze enveloped surrounding objects and obscured the horizon, while a few dense clouds began to appear, quickly passing, and the sultriness and oppression in-

creased. The farmer and his family, accustomed to watch the variations of the atmosphere, pronounced that a storm was brooding, and Mr. Raymond entirely concurred in the opinion, although he did not think it portended speedy danger.

He summoned, however, his animated children, who were enjoying with the true zest of innocence and health the hospitable attentions of their delighted hostess, of whom (accustomed instantly to obey the wishes of their father) they took a hasty farewell, and prepared to return home.

Before, however, they had reached it, the whole heaven was overspread with dark rolling clouds, which rising volume on volume in lurid majesty, wrapped in awful gloom every surrounding object, while the wind, at intervals, moaned melancholy among the lofty branches of the woods they had to pass. The lightning now gleamed with almost incessant and vivid flash far in the horizon, and the thunder rolled awfully at a distance. Raymond, having seen his family safely housed, determined to return to the farm, in order to watch the progress of the tempest, as he had

remarked some vessels off the shore, which he well knew was a dangerous one, and the wind was in a point to render that danger two-fold. With the forethought of true benevolence, he judged that in the event of their being driven on such a dangerous coast, the suggestions of an humane heart and enlightened mind might more effectually guide the operations of well-meaning ignorance, to afford that aid which might become necessary, especially as he had many times at his former residence been called to exertion in similar scenes; nor did he fail deeply to regret, that at this time he should be destitute of that noble resource—a *Life-Boat*, the effectual aid of which, in scenes of complicated distress and almost hopeless anguish, he had frequently witnessed. But he checked the almost-repining thought, that he possessed not the means to furnish every coast of his native isle with one of these noble efforts of human ingenuity.*

Mrs. Raymond, ever co-operating with the humane impulses of her husband, suffered no selfish or weak feeling to discourage his intention; and supplying him with a powerful cordial, to administer if necessary to

* See note at the end of the volume.

the exhausted mariners, she fondly embraced him, and, followed by her prayers, he set out on his errand of mercy. By the time he reached the farm, the scene presented an awful aspect, and the elemental commotion was sufficient to fill the stoutest heart with terror. Raymond, as he anxiously regarded the increasing storm and the lightnings flashing on the mountain waves, mentally said "ah! surely mariners, whose lives are a continued series of privation, hazard, and peril, may claim a pre-eminence of pitying regard, for what mind can conceive, or what feelings can appreciate, the agonies of those who are doomed to await the doubtful effects of such a scene of elemental strife as I now behold! Parents, children, husbands, fathers,—thus tossed on the tumultuous wave!"

As Raymond had predicted, the violence of the tempest had driven a vessel near the coast. She fired her guns of distress; that sound so heart-rending!—now seen a moment, now buried in foam, she appeared nearing a tremendous cliff which overhung the beach, and at the foot of which dangerous and almost hidden rocks extended far into the sea, and which if driven upon, must shiver her to atoms. But these obser-

vations soon became impossible, the profound darkness prevented all hope of ascertaining her powers of resistance, save when a strong gleam of the lightning momentarily discovered her to the anxious view of the spectators, as she appeared to drive before the blast, with a tremendous sea threatening to overwhelm her. While at intervals were heard, through the tumult of the storm, lamentable cries of distress.

In this state of painful suspense the hours slowly passed, till the day began to dawn, and the awful commotion of the elements to subside. But that so wished-for dawn served but to shew the horrid devastation of the scene, and to convince those on land that all attempt at assistance was but to rush on certain destruction, that no common boat could live a moment in such a sea. The rain now descended in torrents, obscuring the view, so that it was with difficulty the distressed vessel was discerned. She appeared with her mast shivered to splinters, and her rigging torn to pieces, tossed on the rocks, which threatened momentary destruction. Raymond looked with pitying eye upon her crew, some aloft among the shrouds, some clinging to the yards; a moment after, he saw

a resistless surge sweep half the number into the yawning deep. Those which the devouring wave yet spared were seen, fraptic with fatigue and terror, running to and fro upon the deck, deprived of all self-command, and with up-lifted eyes and hands, as if invoking Him whose voice the winds and the sea obey. Some were torn from the grasp rendered firm by the terrors of death and the instinctive love of life, by the fury of the wind, which had now risen to the height of a hurricane; some endeavouring to catch at some transient security, which their exhaustion enabled them not to find, while with piteous cries they supplicated for aid, as they sunk beneath the roaring deep! many were seen on the wet shrouds awhile, but at length fainting with terror and fatigue, to drop into the deep that foamed beneath; and some yet remained, in anxious expectation, high on the rolling-mast, as it was rocked in fearful undulations by the stormy blast.

While Raymond, with indescribable agony, beheld this scene of misery, rendered to his imagination more dreadful because he could impart no succour, he saw a tremendous surge rush over the shattered bark, carrying ruin and death in it's stormy course,—

for it swept it fore and aft; and, as with revolving sweep it receded, he thought he perceived a human being apparently left upon a part of the vessel elevated above it's desolating assault, but ere he could ascertain whether it was delusion, the rolling waves again, in terrible career, obscured all objects from his eager view. At length, after a period of intense and fearful suspense, during which the ceaseless orisons of the pious Raymond were offered to Him who stilleth the raging of the sea, that he would vouchsafe to succour the distressed,—was heard a piercing cry of distress; a death-like stillness succeeded, interrupted only by the roaring of the sea, and the loud howling blast.

This awful cry, as it reached the wanderers on the beach and heights, imparted the chill of horror to every heart; for it was the signal of many fellow-beings having passed into eternity, by a violent death. Soon were seen, benumbed with terror and exhaustion, several of the mariners feebly struggling with the agitated waves, and momentarily sinking, unable to contend with their violence; some were impetuously thrown on the projecting crags; some borne for a moment on the lofty surge, then suddenly plunged in

the involving tide, to rise no more ! Ruin and horror presided over the scene, and Raymond and his companions were no longer, unwillingly, the passive spectators of it, for they resorted to every means likely to afford aid to the wretched sufferers.

The shore was quickly traversed in search of the dying and the dead, which each wild surge threw up ; and Raymond hurried from one to the other, to administer aid, and to direct the removal to the farm, or church-yard !

As he was stooping over a young and vigorous seaman, whose fine-proportioned and healthy frame seemed formed to endure all human ill, but whose earthly career was cut short by a desperate wound on the breast, apparently from a pointed rock, the roaring deep cast up at his feet a corpse yet warm with life. The poor sailor had closed his eyes in death, as Raymond attempted to administer a cordial to his lips ere he had him removed. The form that now drew his attention, from that which was so calculated to awaken his strong sensibility, excited in it's turn intense feelings of interest in his bosom. The counte-

nance was it would seem blanched by the hand of death, and exhibited the distortions of a violent one, although it was easy to perceive that it's natural expression was placid and noble. The individual appeared beyond the middle period of life, wore the habit and possessed the exterior indications of a gentleman. His hair, saturated with the water, was grey, partly flowing wildly in the wind round his pallid countenance, partly clinging close to his cold temples ! On his finger was an elegant mourning ring, without exterior motto, and a curious antique one of apparent considerable value.

Raymond instantly directed the unfortunate man to be conveyed to the farm, where he promptly received every aid and attention his situation required. After repeated efforts, and a considerable interval of time, a few drops of cordial were got down and retained, and a quantity of sea-water which had been imbibed was rejected ; but he still continued in a state of insensibility : his limbs, however, from the coldness and contraction of death, became comparatively warm and relaxed, and although his eyes were yet closed, his lips assumed some slight colour and motion. In

the meantime, Raymond, though almost absorbed in the interest created by the situation of this unfortunate, was not unmindful of his companions in the same calamity; but, alas! two only of them were saved from the wreck, and that almost by miracle,—by clinging to the mast as it fell into the ocean, and by their singular expertness in swimming.

The morning advanced in glorious brilliancy, in sweet but awful contrast of the horrors of the preceding night. Raymond had dispatched a messenger for medical aid, and with a hasty note to his family, stating the reasons of his detention at the farm. He then again visited the beach, gave some orders respecting the melancholy duties he there found necessary, and returned to the chamber of the stranger, who yet remained insensible.

On the arrival of Mr. Benson, the surgeon, he greatly approved of the means that had been used, and spoke favorably of the state of the sufferer; at the same time, offering to remain with him, while Raymond returned home to his family, and to take that repose which his great exertions rendered neces-

sary. Raymond gratefully accepted the friendly offer, and the sufferings of the night received all the compensation that love and affection could afford. His mind, however, was too anxious respecting the stranger, to suffer him to remain beyond the period of necessary rest and refreshment; and, accompanied by his wife and daughter, he returned early to the farm. He found the unfortunate man yet insensible, but Mr. Benson pronounced his pulse stronger, and the vital powers to be reviving. The countenance of the sufferer had re-assumed a large portion of what appeared it's natural expression: it was now serene; a soft pensiveness overspreading the features, indicated that the individual had been tried by calamity. As Raymond and his companions stood by the couch, contemplating the form of him who had been so miraculously saved from a watery grave, a gentle sigh and a slight convulsive tremor of the lips gave indication of returning animation. The pitying attendants awaited, in almost breathless anxiety, the result of this symptom of vitality: there seemed a pause in grief, and hope beamed in every eye. Another sigh more deeply drawn, was followed by the eyes half-unclosing, and an effort to change the position.—

Mr. Benson watched every motion, and aided the efforts of reviving nature. Suddenly the stranger put his hand to his breast, and uttered in a feeble and broken voice "Is it gone? is it lost?" while his eyes opened with a wild expression, and his features assumed that of eager inquiry. He seemed endeavouring to find something at his breast, and Mr. Benson, lowering the covering of the bed to assist him, discovered a small gold case, suspended by a riband; he put it into the hand of his patient, in whose features the revulsion from grief to joy, from doubt to certainty, was instantly visible. He endeavoured to raise the locket to his lips, still apparently unconscious there were any witness of his actions, so totally did he appear absorbed in the possession. He continued, with the aid of Mr. Benson, to press the locket to his lips until he sunk into a gentle slumber, the salutary effect of an anodyne, which had been given him.

In this state he continued some hours, and when he awoke, Mrs. Raymond, who with her daughter was watching him, motioned for Emily to withdraw. She observed the stranger follow her with his eyes, as she quitted the apartment. Soon after, he said, in

a tone of anxious inquiry, "Where is she? will she not come?" Then again feeling for the locket, he touched a spring and it flew open, discovering a miniature, upon which he gazed intently. It was that of a young female, apparently little older than Emily; and the features were not strange to Mrs. Raymond, although she could not recall when or where she had seen the resemblance. The stranger continued to gaze upon the picture, and from time to time to watch the door with eager attention. Mr. Benson marked, with professional acuteness, every indication of the prevailing state of his patient's mind, and apprehended the original of the cherished portrait had perished in the vessel. With this idea, boats were dispatched, and every means to recover the body were resorted to, but in vain. He suggested the propriety of Emily's being again introduced to the bedside. On her approach, the stranger fixed a penetrating look of intense interest upon her countenance, but spoke not; at length he averted his eyes, and burst into a passion of tears. Mr. Benson hailed them as harbingers of returning collectedness, from whatever cause they might flow, and directed Emily to withdraw. Her absence was soon noticed by the stranger, and he said in a low

and tremulous voice, "Will not that angel revisit me? I once possessed such an one, but she is long since the companion of the blessed." This *long since* satisfied the hearts of Raymond and his companions, that the unhappy man had not been deprived of the original of the portrait by the dreadful calamity to which he himself had so nearly fallen a victim.

Being satisfied that Emily should return, when he was somewhat more composed, he was left to the benevolent care of Mr. Benson and the humane mistress of the farm, and gradually drawn by their judicious attention to express his feelings, and to make inquiries respecting the situation in which he was.

When Raymond again visited him, he gratefully and feelingly expressed his sense of the kindness which had saved him from a watery grave. From this time the powers of intellect gradually acquired strength, although the frame continued in an extreme state of debility. He was, however, in a few days removed to the parsonage, where the united exertions of the amiable inmates were put forth to amuse and to interest him; and by every one of whom he was

beloved and respected, for his urbanity and gentleness of manners, and that cheerful resignation of spirit which is perhaps the most acceptable homage we can pay to the Almighty Dispenser of our lot.

But Emily was more especially his chosen companion. He would for hours regard her with parental interest, as she was employed in her several avocations; he would listen with evident strong interest, if she were reading; he would seem scarcely to breathe when she sung: in short, she seemed essential to his comfort, and with her image it was manifest was associated some period of past happiness.

He had announced himself to Raymond by the name of Delamere, and in several incidental conversations had related circumstances respecting himself, and his desire of remaining an inmate with him, when he had ascertained some circumstances respecting a friend he had not seen for several years, and to obtain intelligence of whom he had visited Stockholm; from which place he was returning, when overtaken by the tempest, which had wrecked the vessel in which he had embarked. He had so far recovered his strength,

as to be able to walk on the lawn, which surrounded the little mansion of domestic love he now inhabited, and expressed his wish to Raymond, of offering his public thanks in the village church, for the mercies vouchsafed to him; rendered to him doubly precious by the instruments through which it had been effected.

Emily proposed, that, in order to try his strength, herself and brothers should walk with him to the church, previous to the day of public service; and the morrow was agreed upon. It rose auspiciously fine for the projected stroll, and Mr. Delamere felt strengthened by the softness of the air, and inspirited by the vivacity of his young companions, upon the two eldest of whom he leaned, as they pursued their walk through a pleasant plantation leading to the church, situated at a short distance from the house. They entered the church-yard on the opposite side to the spot where the ashes of "the unknown" reposed; but having rested awhile in the porch of the church, they turned an angle of the building, and it immediately arrested the attention of Mr. Delamere. He advanced with a step quickened by the interest it awakened, and silently read the inscription. As he did so, Emily,

upon whose arm he still leaned, felt him tremble, and said "I fear, my dear sir, you are fatigued, let us return to the porch." He did not appear to notice her remark, but asked, in an agitated tone, some particulars respecting the tomb and the individual whose remains it covered. Emily and her brothers could give him little information beyond that afforded by the inscription, but added, that their father was acquainted with the circumstances.

Mr. Delamere expressed his desire instantly to return to the rectory, which, however, he found some difficulty in effecting, so completely had agitation deprived him of his partially-recovered strength. On their return, Raymond was from home, and for the invalid perhaps fortunately so, as it gave him time to recover, at least from his corporeal fatigue, ere his mind was subjected to increased agitation. On Raymond's return, an explanation took place; and fortunately the benevolent precaution of Mr. Albury enabled it to be given clear and satisfactory, for, previous to his decease, he had deposited in a small cabinet the miniature, the watch, and some other valuables found on the person of "the unknown,"

together with a succinct narrative of the circumstances, and the original M.S.—leaving directions that the cabinet should be placed under the care of whoever might be instituted to the rectory, the contents to remain as vouchers of the fact, should any inquiries ever be made. The examination of this cabinet now clearly proved the identity of “the unknown” with the friend Mr. Delamere was anxiously seeking. The miniature was the duplicate of that treasured by him, and a particular seal attached to the watch was recognised by Delamere as one he had himself presented to the unfortunate Albert; the letters he also declared to be the hand-writing of his beloved and lamented niece Eugenia.*

The fate of this unfortunate young man being thus clearly and decidedly ascertained, at once satisfied and deeply affected the venerable Delamere, whom it made more than ever desirous to fix himself on a spot to which it gave a greatly-augmented interest. It naturally followed that the unfortunate Albert now formed

* The assumed names are retained, in order to prevent misapprehension.

the frequent subject of conversation, from which it appeared that Mr. Delamere, failing to have any reply to repeated letters he had addressed to Albert, determined to return to England, being unable to divest himself of a deep interest in the fate of one who had been loved by the child of his affections.

His long and anxious inquiries, however, had been fruitless; all he could learn was, that he had announced to a friend his intention of travelling. At length having heard, that Lord Algernon was making a northern tour, and was then at Stockholm, he determined to proceed thither; but, on his arrival, he found that that unhappy man had a few weeks before ended a life of infidelity, and its consequent vices, by self-murder. During the residence of Mr. Delamere at Stockholm, he became accidentally acquainted with a gentleman who had frequently met with Albert when he accompanied Lord Algernon to the continent; and who had seen and lamented the ascendancy which he had gained over the noble mind of Albert, by his simulation. From this gentleman, Delamere learned many particulars of which he was previously ignorant, having little idea that the principles of his young

friend had been exposed to such danger, and were in fact so changed.

These particulars, together with the result of his own personal observations, were frankly communicated to his friend Raymond, and are condensed into the following brief narrative :—

Albert was the only child of an officer of distinguished merit, who fell in the service of his country, while his son was yet an infant. His mother, a lovely, affectionate, but weak woman (under whose wardship he was left), was induced by her maternal feelings to keep him at home, under her own eye, when he had attained a fit age to be placed under more proper restraint. It is true, she engaged a tutor, but it was under such injudicious restrictions, that no man of real probity or talent could submit to them, consequently they were frequently changed, and the situation was, in fact, nearly a sinecure. This false affection blinded the mother of Albert to his real well-being, for she considered not, that, to be able to resist the assaults of the world, we must be early disciplined to meet them ; and that, from the very dawn of reason,

it's powers must be exercised in the subjection of passion, and in distinguishing the good from the evil tendencies of our nature;—that a knowledge of the world can alone correct that self-love which is the invariable consequence of living exempted from competition, and that self-will, which is as certainly the noxious fruit of the human mind if left uncontrolled.

With the same perversion of affection, his fond mother mistook obstinacy for firmness, and waywardness of will for a manly spirit. It must be confessed, that his winning manners and graceful form, induced every one to compliment her upon possessing such an engaging boy; while these encomiums were naturally listened to with a glow of maternal love, exulting in the blessing. How far this early-implanted, and cherished vanity and conceit might have been carried, it is hardly possible to calculate; for Albert was deprived of his fond mother when he was about eleven years of age, by a severe and rapid illness,—so rapid as scarcely to allow her time to appoint Mr. Delamere (the father of Eugenia), and another gentleman known to her deceased husband, guardians to her beloved boy, upon condition he was to reside with Mr. Delamere,

who had married a favorite friend. Happy would it have been for Albert, had this guardianship taken place at an earlier period of life. Mr. Delamere saw, with all the regret of a benevolent and enlightened mind, the mischiefs that had been produced by false indulgence, on a youth of lofty spirit, the very perversions of which partook of the nobleness of its nature; for, although ever erring, Albert was sincere and generous in prompt atonement, and, self-condemned, would abjure his boyish pride, and humble himself before the gentle firmness of Mr. Delamere, who was indefatigable in storing his mind with knowledge, invigorating the neglected or languishing principles, pointing out to him the fatal tendency of his impetuosity; and directing his passions to the lesser oppositions of private life, in order to prepare him for the conflicts of society. His judicious and tender discipline was rewarded by the daily-increasing exaltation in the character of his pupil, in whom the graces and the virtues seemed to have formed a beautiful alliance. Sincerity, truth, and humanity were the spontaneous growth of Albert's soul; they had languished by neglect, but Mr. Delamere's care improved them into principles, watched with unceasing

vigilance the smallest spring of selfish or ungenerous sentiment, and eagerly availed himself of passing events to impress upon the mind of his pupil the happiness of virtue, the comfort of Religion, and the beauty of honour. Delamere was well fitted for the responsibility he thus faithfully fulfilled: his reading was extensive, and brought into practical use in the government of his life and the good of all who were connected with him; and his conversation was dignified by that genuine liberality and candour, which was the natural fruit of his real integrity of heart. To these essential qualities of the man, were added the elegant accomplishments of the scholar and the gentleman;—his manners were polished, and his knowledge of mankind extensive and accurate. Albert, in the daily contemplation of this bright example, was animated with a desire to imitate the high qualities of his beloved guardian. In doing this, he had much to combat of early impressions and early habits, continually returning to the bias they had received; but the conflict expanded his reasoning faculties, and had Mr. Delamere lived but a short time longer, there is every reason to believe that Albert would have entered the arena of the world.

endowed with strength for the combats that awaited him.

But He who touches the springs of providence, ordained it otherwise. Mr. Delamere lived but to see the affections of his pupil's heart brought in aid of his lessons of wisdom ; he saw his beloved ward daily becoming more worthy of an only and lovely daughter, whose mind he had moulded, and to adjure him, by all his hopes of happiness, so to guide his life as to constitute the felicity of her's ; he then breathed his last in the arms of these equally dear objects of his paternal affection. By the will of his mother, Albert was to accede to his large property on attaining his eighteenth year ; within a few months only of this period, he lost his invaluable friend, and his other guardian (the complete contrast of him he with so much reason lamented) immediately pronounced it his opinion, that it was absolutely necessary for him to proceed to college, and subsequently to travel, in order to wear off the rust contracted under " the pedant Delamere."

The inclinations of Albert did not of course oppose this determination ; and it was now that he was to

bring his theory into practice. Albert had a heart moulded to social joy, to social affection; and the ample tide of pleasure now opened to his view. The fascinations of the world presented themselves to his yet inexperienced vision, and in the endless gratifications of the present hour, the voice of prudence sometimes began to be dismissed as an intruder. Yet, though led by example, ridicule, and novelty, into the intemperate amusements of folly, Albert was still free from the captivity of vicious inclinations or practice. But the dignity of thought had been violated, and his mind was hence laid open to assault. His manners, his talents, his vivacity, and his fortune caused his society to be eagerly sought by those who did, and by those who did not, possess a proportion of the same fascinating and endearing qualities.

Among the many who courted his favour, was one who seldom condescended to grant his notice to any but the supereminently gifted. This individual was Lord Algernon, distinguished for his suavity and ease of manners, and even more by his elegant accomplishments and superior genius; but whose character, formed upon the heartless system of Chesterfield, was as des-

titute of morality as might be expected, when that code is made the standard of action. Upon this was ingrafted the pliant and convenient system of modern philosophy, which regards with derision those maxims inculcating the necessity of acquiring authority over the passions, and inuring them to early obedience.

Upon these combined systems, did Lord Algernon establish his code of morals and of faith; and he allowed the same latitude to the government of the understanding, calling intellectual errors by the plausible names of cultivated taste, superior judgment, and freedom from prejudice: while wild starts of fancy and traits of moral obliquity were dignified with the praise of originality of genius, and the true picture of the human soul; thus imperceptibly vitiating the taste, and perverting the morals, of those he drew within his fascinating circle.

But Lord Algernon was too great an adept in the Chesterfield school, not to perceive that his theory must be cautiously unfolded to an understanding of such rich culture as that of Albert, whose noble mode of thinking could not fail to be remarked by a

discernment so penetrating. The same simulation, in regard to his practice, was necessary to effect his ardent desire of ensnaring him in his toils. He was fully aware that the only way of gaining his wished-for empire, was to enlist that very understanding in the cause, by cautiously and artfully reusing the pride of talent, in a soul he saw would not be insensible to the flattery; and to bring in aid of his purposes that warm imagination, which was easily excited by the charms of novelty, and the powers of wit and eloquence.

With this fell purpose in view, he carefully concealed his real sentiments and vicious practice, closely studying the foibles and peculiar cast of feelings of him he meant to seduce. He perplexed his understanding with nice distinctions, and sometimes spoke in such terms, and with a meaning so ambiguous, that Albert was at a loss to know whether his words were to convey his approbation of the sentiment he uttered, or his contempt of it as a weakness. He so artfully blended vice and virtue, that the mind was bewildered in its endeavours to ascertain the barriers, and, by degrees, that "jealous sensibility" was de-

stroyed, which is the safeguard of those exposed to temptation. When he found he had awakened the curiosity, and shaken the steadiness and consistency of Albert, he would suddenly pretend to doubt the truth of his own opinion, and concede it to that of his purposed victim; and by thus tacitly doing homage to his judgment, prevented all suspicion that he was seeking to obtain an influence over the mind and feelings of the unsuspecting Albert; who, from listening with curiosity and complacency to his arguments, was soon by his art beguiled to resort to him upon points he wished resolved, fully convinced his superior judgment would be offered in candour, and bearing in view his best interests.

Algernon saw his advantage, marked with secret satisfaction the success of his unworthy arts to level a noble soul to the utter prostration of his own; and he failed not, by the liveliest sallies of wit, by all the graces of manner, by all the resources of perverted talent, to fix his influence over the unsuspecting soul of Albert, enthusiastic, sincere, and honorable as it was. Early bad impressions began to revive, and the society of this dangerous friend began to weaken those which

had succeeded under the discipline of the virtuous Delamere. Every succeeding day they were recurred to with less pleasure, because the recollection of them was a silent reproach to his altered opinions ; although he endeavoured to believe that his repugnance arose from the increased expansion of his mind, which would naturally induce him to disregard formal precepts and hypothetical cautions,—not applicable, as it would appear, to the polished manners and high illumination of that society, of which he now formed a part.

Self-confidence being thus fatally revived in his soul, and fostered by the sophisms of his insidious friend, soon laid open the mind of Albert to his machinations, to pervert it's powers and debase it's energies, by infusing the baneful spirit of Infidelity ; and as he perceived his influence strengthen, he more openly divulged his bold and novel opinions, addressing them to his imagination, through the corruscations of wit, or to his feelings, by high-drawn pictures of the miseries produced by fanaticism and superstition ; but as much as possible avoiding a direct appeal to his reasoning faculties, which, he was aware, if

suffered to exercise themselves, would eventually detect his sophistries, although at the same time he led him to suppose he was keeping those faculties in full exertion, by the study of mathematical speculations.

Thus while Albert thought he was laudably pursuing truth, he was insensibly undermining and subverting the clear principles of morality and Religion within his bosom. Not, as has been justly observed, that metaphysical studies have this pernicious tendency, far from it; if carried only to a certain point, they have a contrary and most beneficial consequence, "as they will secure the young student from being caught in the snares of sophists, by teaching him to abstract and to generalize, to simplify his ideas, and, above all, will teach him there are in Religion, as in all sciences, certain primary and fundamental truths which are only obscured by too much reasoning, and which, after being firmly established, should be cherished as fixed principles in the mind, where no subtle objections or acute distinctions should be allowed to weaken or destroy their power."* But to this guarded study, Algernon put a decided negative, "drink deep or taste

* Porteus.

not" was his motto, when he wished to recommend his own opinions, and offered his favorite authors for study; and he had ever books at hand, to meet the craving curiosity of the ardent Albert, for he possessed very many of those innumerable volumes now written expressly to captivate the heart, and to lull the reasoning powers, of the youthful student. During the period of his college life, the influence of Lord Algernon, by these means, daily became more confirmed over the mind of Albert, and so powerful was it, that he felt the greatest repugnance at the thought of separation.

Lord Algernon determined upon a visit to the continent, and invited Albert to accompany him; an invitation he most gladly accepted. The seed which had been so carefully sown, now found a fostering sun. An intimate acquaintance formed with several members of a German university, quickly ripened into fructification the germs of that pestilential philosophy which had been so sedulously implanted in the breast of Albert, by his *enlightened* friend Algernon. Every artifice and plausible sophism of Infidelity were brought in aid, to render him a worthy participator of their

illumination; and his fine talents were wasted in abstract speculations, tending to no end but the abasement of human nature; under the plausible pretext of forwarding it's perfectibility,—a picture drawn by the visionary pencil of fancy, on the vaguely-defined tablet of conjecture. But although Lord Algernon thus gained his empire over the mind of Albert, he could not, even by his example or his ridicule, pervert the feelings of his heart, they faithfully rested on Eugenia; and perhaps it was this sacred affection for a virtuous woman, which was the safeguard of Albert from utter depravation of principle. His search for truth was certainly sincere; but not all the persuasions of Algernon of the power of our nature to rise above externals, could prevail on Albert to reduce into a science the emotions of his heart, and confine them within the narrow limits of materialism; hence he endured a continual internal struggle. His love for Eugenia was more that of sentiment than sense,—delicate, tender, and constant; the object of which remained indelibly fixed in the mind, like a conscience, which repelled any sentiments tending to affect it's purity: hence was his moral conduct unstained, although his mind was bewildered in a chaos, which

threatened the total annihilation of that silent monitor, fixed as a sentinel against evil in every human bosom. Thus did sentiment guard his morality; a task she does not always perform, and upon whom can be no solid dependence. Warmth of heart, enthusiasm of feeling, a refined taste, and unabated perseverance in intellectual pursuits, with a frank urbanity in unfolding the treasures of his mind, distinguished the young Albert; but these very qualities, so admirable in themselves, are in their very nature liable to perversions and invasion. His sincerity exposed him to the designs of the crafty, his enthusiasm made him listen to absurd theories, and his perseverance too often degenerated into obstinacy of opinion. He was therefore not of a character safely to breathe the atmosphere of German speculation: the gloom and mystery which envelop their philosophy too much accorded with that high-wrought enthusiasm which converted them into the sacred veil of wisdom; and he was too apt to infer, from the restless desire of novelty which marked its votaries, the existence of supereminent talent and the purest principles of patriotism and virtue.*

* See Jacob on the German Universities.

The result of the pernicious lessons he there imbibed has been seen : we have seen them producing their invariable consequences,—disappointment and misery ! Whether or not Eugenia was made the favoured instrument to remove the veil of doubt, or whether it was reserved for the cold hand of death to withdraw it, must remain unknown ; but of this we are certain, that Truth, in full-orbed lustre, burst on the soul at the moment it was launched on the boundless ocean of eternity !

Reader, when thou sheddest the tear of pity for the awful fate of the misguided Albert, let that fate teach thee to cherish the hopes which rise from the well-spring of thy Christian faith ;—hopes which cheer this dim and passing scene, and are the sure pledges of that which is all-glorious and enduring.

“ It cannot be, that for a biding place
“ This earth alone is our’s ; it cannot be,
“ That for a fleeting span of chequer’d years
“ Of broken sunshine, cloudiness, and storm,
“ We tread this sublunary scene,—and die,
“ Like winds that wail amid a dreary wood,

“ To silence and to nothingness ; like waves
“ That murmur on the sea-beach, and dissolve.
“ Why then from out the temple of our hearts
“ Do aspirations spring, that overleap
“ The barriers of our mortal destiny,
“ And chain us to the very gates of heav’n ?
“ Why does the beauty of a vernal morn,
“ When earth, exulting from her wintry tomb,
“ Breaks forth in early flowers, and song of birds
“ Strike on our hearts as ominous, and say
“ Surely man’s fate is such ? At summer eve
“ Why do the fairy unsubstantial clouds,
“ Deck’d out in rainbow garments, glimmer forth
“ To mock us with their loveliness, and tell
“ That earth hath not of these ? The tiny stars,
“ That gem in countless crowds the midnight sky,
“ Why were they made so far beyond the grasp
“ Of sight and comprehension, so beyond
“ The expansion of our limited faculties,
“ If one day, like the isles that speck the main,
“ These worlds shall spread not open to our view ?
“ Why do the mountain steeps their solitudes
“ Expand ? or, roaring down the dizzy rocks, “
“ The mighty cataracts descend in foam ?
“ Is it to shew our insignificance ?
“ To tell us we are nought ? And, finally,
“ If born not to behold supernal things,

" Why have we glimpses of beatitude,
 " Have images of majesty and beauty
 " Presented to our gaze,—and taken from us ?

* * * * *

" *Sweet portions of some unseen Paradise*
 " *That visit still the silence of the thought,*
 " *And bid it yet aspire.*" *

ANON.

* The three last lines are altered from the original, the alteration marked by italics.

NOTE.

A relation of the incident which gave rise to the noble invention of the Life-Boat, it is presumed, may not be uninteresting to the friends of humanity.

In September, 1769, the ship Adventure, of Newcastle, was stranded on the Herd Sand, on the south side of Tyne-mouth Haven, Northumberland, in the midst of tremendous breakers. In this dreadful calamity, all the crew dropped

one by one, exhausted, into the deep, in the sight of thousands of spectators, not one of whom could be prevailed upon by any reward to venture out to the assistance of the distressed ship, in any boat or coble of the common construction. On this melancholy occasion, a general sympathy was awakened, and the gentlemen of South Shields called a meeting of the inhabitants; at which a committee was appointed, and premiums were offered for plans of a Boat which should be best calculated to brave the dangers of the boisterous ocean. Amongst the numerous proposals and models offered, was one of the latter, constructed by a young man in humble life, residing as a boat painter at North Shields; this model eminently possessed that beautiful simplicity which usually distinguishes the operations of true genius. With the modesty which is also its invariable characteristic, the ingenious artist communicated his invention to Mr. Greathead, ship-builder at South Shields; and it was by him presented to the committee, and unanimously voted to have the preference. Mr. Greathead was directed immediately to build a Boat upon the plan, at the expense of the committee. This Boat and a similar one for North Shields were launched on the same day, January 30th, 1790: and so entirely have they answered, and indeed exceeded, the most sanguine expectations of the promoters, that since that time several hundred persons have been saved at the entrance of the Tyne alone, who must without their aid inevitably have been lost, amidst the tremendous seas of that northern

point of our island. In no instance have they ever failed in affording the desired succour.

The genius of the inventor seems to have been guided in the construction of his Boat, by a most common and simple fact. With a spirit of observation, which is the parent of invention and handmaid of talent, he remarked, that when a spheroid is divided into quarters, each quarter is elliptical, and nearly resembles the half of a bowl, having a curvature with projecting ends; this thrown into the sea, however agitated, cannot be sunk or upset, or lie with the bottom upwards.

To the correctness of the following description of the Life-Boat, by Dr. Gregory, the writer of this note is enabled to bear witness, from personal observation of the Boat at North Shields, aided by the explanation of a scientific friend, whose kindness procured the opportunity of inspection:—

“The Boat is 30 feet in length, and 10 in breadth; the depth, from the gunwale to the lower part of the keel, 3 feet 3 inches; from the top of the sterns (both ends similar) to the horizontal line at the bottom of the keel, 5 feet 9 inches. The keel is formed of plank 3 inches thick, and proportional breadth in midships, but narrowing gradually towards the ends, forming a great convexity downwards. The sides, from the under part of the gunwale along the whole length,

extending 21 feet 6 inches, are cased with layers of cork to the depth of 16 inches. The thickness of this cork casing being 4 inches, it projects at the top somewhat beyond the gunwale; on the outside, the cork is secured by slips of copper, and the Boat is also secured with copper nails. The seats are five, and double banked; the Boat may therefore be rowed with ten oars. These seats are firmly stanchioned, and constructed in a manner to secure the men. The side oars are short, with iron thowls, and rope grumets, to enable the rower to pull either way. The Boat is steered by an oar at each end, the steering oar being considerably longer than the rower's. The platform, placed at the bottom of the Boat the length of the midships, is elevated at the ends, to give the steersman greater power. The interior of the Boat, from the seats down to the platform, is entirely cased with cork, of which the quantity affixed amounts to seven hundred weight."

This greatly contributes to the buoyancy of the Boat, and, from the mode of it's being affixed, tends much to break the shock when coming in contact with any opposing object, as well as being a defence; but it's principal advantage is preserving the erect position of the Boat, and facilitating her recovery from any sudden assault from the heavy waves. But, independent of the cork, the construction of the Boat is admirably adapted for the purpose for which it is designed. The peculiarity of her form enables her to rise over the

waves, and, both ends being similar, to be rowed either way. Constructed with a fine entrance below, like the fishing-boat called a coble, she easily divides the waves, while the convexity of the bottom and the elliptical form of the stern cause her to rise with astonishing buoyancy in a sea rising mountains high, and to launch forward with a rapidity truly wonderful, without shipping a sea. Were it possible for the mind to divest itself of the impressions of dread, in such scenes of calamity as call for the aid of this noble invention, the beauty of its operations must excite the highest admiration as she rides on the boisterous billows of the deep.—Never perhaps does the observation of the great Bacon, “knowledge is power,” come with more force upon the mind than at the moment we anxiously watch this herald of safety approaching the perishing vessel.

The Boat is equipped with fir oars of the best quality, the rove ash oars being found too pliant amongst the breakers, and when made heavy exhausting to the rowers.

Twelve men are required to work the Boat, that is, five on each side double banked, and one man at each end to steer her, and to be ready at the opposite end to take the steering oar when required. The steersman is required, if possible, to head the sea, to fix his eye upon the wave or breaker, and encourage the rowers to give way as the Boat rises to it; being then aided by the force of the oars, she

launches over it with awful rapidity. When the wreck is reached, and succour given, if the wind blows to the land the Boat will come ashore without any other effort than steering.

It is kept in a covered shed or house, and regularly watered, to preserve the cork from shrinking.

FINIS.

